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The great American revival



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The Great American Revival

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THE GREAT AMERICAN REVIVAL

A CASE STUDY IN HISTORICAL EVANGELISM
WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR TODAY

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ARTHUR B. STRICKLAND

STANDARD PRESS



CINCINNATI, OHIO

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The Standard Publishing Company

AN INTRODUCTION

ON his desk Ruskin used to keep a block of chalcedony in which was carved "Today." Every time he saw it, it must have moved him to present action. But one does well to remember that today is the child of yesterday, and will be the father of tomorrow.

Dr. Strickland, in this volume of his, makes us all his debtors by his stirring appeal to the vindication of history. History is ever the greatest prophylactic against despair both in church and state. Here we see causes and their effects. We see that "through the ages one increasing purpose runs." Progress has never been a steady forward movement. It has its flood tides and its ebb. There have been times in the history of the church in America, as Dr. Strickland shows, when it has inverted its torch and almost put out its light in the ashes of its own indifference. But still its regeneration has come, not from without, but from within. There were always a few names in Sardis who had not defiled their garments. There was always a saving remedy. In orderly fashion, Dr. Strickland shows us the marching years and the providential unfolding of God's great plans. Here is the story of the Great Awakening. Here stands Jonathan Edwards, saying, "If it were revealed to me that in any stage of the world's history there could be but one man who were in all to fulfill the will of God, I would strive with all my might to be that man."

If any one has fear as to the religious situation in our colleges today, let him read the story of Yale and President Dwight. If a man is troubled over pagan New England, let him read about the men who, with an ax on one shoulder and a gun on the other, took the trail of the pioneer and laid the foundations of new States in the fear of God. The story of Asbury, Peter Cartwright and Jason Lee ought to make every follower of the Galilean feel for the buckle of his belt. The lives of Nettleton and Finney, of Payson and Moody, are examples of what spiritual devotion will accomplish in any age under any circumstances.

A national revival of religion is long overdue in America. Pentecosts are bending low and they will fall when the church is of one accord, and puts the first things first. The problems of social betterment will be solved only through spiritual achievement. It is good men and good women who will bring in the good age. It is a personal and pastoral evangelism which is to bring the renaissance of the church and the desired change in society.

As Dr. Strickland masses the facts of history, they present a challenge to the church which ought to quicken its faith and send it to its task of making a new world wherein dwelleth righteousness. So shall peace take the place of war, and love conquer hate, and the church become, indeed, the light of the world and the salt of the earth. With all my heart I commend this book.

CHARLES L. GOODELL.

New York City.

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Chapter I.

RELIGIOUS REVIVALS A NATIONAL NECESSITY

A RELIGIOUS revival often has been a national necessity. Great revivals of religion have resulted in social and political reconstruction. History encourages the hope that society again can be redeemed through a spiritual awakening. The late W. T. Stead said: "The progress of the world is largely made up of successful revivals. The revival of religion has been the inevitable precursor of social and political reform."

This was true of England. It took a revival to liberate that country from the chaos of feudal misrule. The people welcomed the austere Cistercians as they traveled over the moors and through the forests. Everywhere the people met in groups to pray. England was spiritually awakened. This resulted in the people securing the Great Charter.

Later the Dominican and the Franciscan friars carried the gospel to England's poor. Spiritually revitalized, these people secured their first parliament. When these same monastic orders declined spiritually, it took another revival under Wycliffe and his Lollards to bring the people back to God. This awakening reasserted and demonstrated the fact that the rights of man must be respected.

Tyndal and his successors gave the Bible to the English people in their mother tongue. Bible read-

ing became universal and led to the English Reformation, the Puritan Revival, the overthrow of the Stuarts and the founding of the English Commonwealth.

The Wesleyan and Evangelical revivals produced a new philanthropy which abolished slavery, mitigated the cruel penal laws, reformed the prisons, and gave rise to popular education. These facts led W. T. Stead to write: "Until this nation goes to the penitent form, it never really pulls itself together for any serious work."

If these words are true of England, a monarchy, how much more must they be of America, a democracy. Babson sensed this: "First let me say that we believe the only development which can possibly keep democracy afloat is a revival of religion. Under the old system of centralized government, conditions depended only upon the character of the rulers and not upon the character of the masses. Once a government could prosper, whatever the condition of the churches, or even without any educational system for the people, but today, with every man a voter and with all the votes counting the same, the stability of the government depends not upon wealth nor armies, but on the character of the electorate."

America, Land of Revivals

America, in becoming a mighty nation, depended upon great revivals of religion. The United States has been pre-eminently a land of revivals. It was conceived in a revival. The men and women who

came out of the Puritan revival in England, and the Pietist revival on the Continent, became the germ of our future nation. These noble souls with a revitalized spiritual life came to the New World to enjoy a fuller, richer expression of the divine life surging within them. Thus America's conception as a great republic was in a revival atmosphere. The forms and forces of its national life took their rise in the religion of her people.

When the early days of hardship and privation gave way to times of general prosperity, the children of these pioneers neglected things spiritual. There was a drift from God in all the colonies. A great awakening in the middle decades of the eighteenth century called the people back to God. This spiritual awakening was part of a great national and international revival. The Wesleys and Whitefield in England, Howell Harris in Wales, and Edwards, the Tennants and Whitfield in America, were the outstanding revivalists. This movement is called by the historians "The Great Awakening."

The Great Awakening took the diverse and dis-united colonies and gave them a spiritual unity, without which political union never could have been secured. George Whitefield, in his evangelistic labors in all the colonies and among their various religious groups, paved the way for the political union which came in the decade following his death. He is the spiritual father of the American Republic. The Great Awakening in the middle of the eighteenth century became a vital factor in the making of our nation.

Following the Great Awakening, religion was honored on every side. Infidelity had received a stunning blow. Christianity was in the ascendancy. It became popular to join the church, and, in some instances, church membership was a necessary passport to respectable society. In other cases, it was a prerequisite to political preferment. The churches were filled. With a population of nearly three million, there was an evangelical minister for every two thousand people. This wave of popularity, however, filled the churches with many people who did not possess any vital Christian experience.

The French and Indian Wars, and later the Revolutionary War, had a depressing influence upon the church. War is never friendly to spirituality. Bitterness and hatred animated all classes. The church, in fostering patriotism, ceased to develop personal piety. Infidelity lifted up its head again, and waved its scepter over the land. England was suffering from the profligate School of Bolingbroke. Voltaire visited England, absorbed his teachings and returned to corrupt the French. He visited the court of Frederick the Great, where he introduced the reign of infidelity and skepticism.

Thomas Jefferson visited France and brought back copious draughts of the same infidel poison. As President, he exerted a great influence in spreading infidelity in America. Thomas Paine at this time sought to supplant the Bible with his "Age of Reason." It looked as though Christianity in the New World was to be entombed by a popularized atheism. "Our people had discovered that

there could be a church without a Pope or Bishop, a Land without Prince and King and were on the point of deciding that there could be a world without a God."

However, a godly remnant, an intercessory minority, still survived. God interposed, and soon in all the eastern States and in all the western territories the power of God was felt. Infidelity was defeated, and both church and nation entered upon a new and advancing era of its history. The story of this great revival is the story of the remarkable rebirth of aggressive evangelical Christianity in America.

It was the first great revival which came to the United States of America after it had become an independent nation. This revival brought the church in America to a sense of its great mission in the world. It gave birth to the great missionary and philanthropic movements which made the nineteenth century so outstanding in this expression of Christian life and service. Historians call this "The Great Revival."

Some historians believe The Great Revival saved the United States politically as well as religiously. This revival met America's national necessity. France at the same time had a similar need. This nation, with its extreme atheism and irreligion, stands in great contrast with America. Lamartine has well expressed it: "The republic of these men without a God was quickly stranded. The liberty won by so much heroism, and so much genius did not find in France a conscience to shelter it, a God

to avenge it, a people to defend it against that atheism which was called glory."

The Great Revival was long sustained. Its opening scenes were followed by successive revival waves, which continued with more or less interest and power, until 1842. This revival was followed by great national prosperity; gold was discovered in the West; railroads were projected across the continent; banks were established everywhere; industrial plants sprung up like mushrooms overnight. Many thought the golden age of America's prosperity had arrived. The great panic which broke out in Wall Street, Oct. 12, 1857, was the handwriting on the wall. The nation had been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Banks failed, business houses closed, railroads went into bankruptcy, and all business was at a standstill. Man's extremity was God's opportunity.

Providentially the Fulton Street noonday prayer meeting had been organized three weeks before the panic. This prayer meeting grew in interest and attendance as the panic tightened its grip on the city. Many other prayer meetings were established in New York City. These were held from six o'clock in the morning until late in the night. Prayer meetings were held in all sections of the country. A great revival swept America. This "Prayer-meeting Revival" crossed the ocean and visited, in turn, the churches of Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England. It is claimed that a million converts were won for Christ and church membership in this great Prayer-meeting Revival.

The Prayer-meeting revival prepared America for the impending crisis of its Civil War. The war did not completely quench the revival fires. Revivals continued in the Northern States. They broke out in the Confederate camps. Following the Civil War came Moody and his successors—B. Fay Mills, M. B. Williams, J. Wilbur Chapman, Biedewolf, Sunday, Torrey, Gipsy Smith, and many others, who have made notable contributions to revival successes in American churches.

The World War marked a new epoch in America's religious life. Even prior to the War it was evident that evangelism was in retreat. In turn, evangelism has given way, as the center of interest, to the Social Gospel, to Religious Education and the more recent emphasis on Christian Worship. At the same time where evangelism was stressed there has been a growing departure from the fundamental revival principle to that of methods and organizations. Instead of insisting on the revitalization of its spiritual life as the essential condition in soul winning, the church has depended upon the perfection of human methods in highly organized campaigns. The word "revival" went into disrepute during this period.

Revival, a Much Misused Word

Out of the American religious revivals has come a threefold use of the word "revival." Throughout the centuries revivals at times have been associated with certain excesses of emotion and excitement. Because of these physical accidentals, the

word "revival" has attached to it certain connotations which are offensive. Some psychologists use the word synonymously with erratic physical excitements. However, careful students of revival history have no difficulty in distinguishing the froth of emotional excitement from the mighty wave beneath it.

"We must carefully separate the revival from its adjuncts and accessions. We must distinguish it from false and dangerous excitements which have usurped its name; for, common and almost technical as the word revival has become, it is often understood by those who oppose all earnestness in religion and all true religion itself, to denote every species of religious extravagance. Even the wildest outbreaks of fanaticism and superstition are dignified by the name of revival" (Fish's *Handbook of Revivals*, p. 11).

"There are worse things than emotional excesses," writes President Little. "Moral stupor is worse. So is the seared conscience and the petrified heart. So is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life" (*Revival, a Symposium*, p. 48).

Revival, the spiritual awakening of Christians, has been closely associated with the winning of the unbeliever. In fact, the revival of the church has been its most successful evangelistic method. Hence, the word "revival" has come to mean any special protracted effort to win the unconverted to a Christian experience. Beardsley writes: "According to the generic significance of the word, it

means to reanimate, to awaken new life, and hence it proposes a state of declension. But since the awakened church is always a converting agency, any religious awakening is a revival, whether the term is applied to the work of converting the unregenerate, or the task of bringing new life to a dead and decaying church. With this understanding revivals are as old as human history" (Beardsley, *History of American Revivals*, pp. 41, 42).

Revival, as defined by the dictionary, is a "restoration from a state of languor, depression or discouragement." The frailties and failures of our human nature make necessary the divine intervention which makes possible the spiritual revitalization of God's people. There is a supernatural element in all spiritual revivals; God continues to be the "great marshal of events." In every revival which history records, the human preparation has been inadequate, defective, pitifully meager. It is profoundly heartening the declension has its limitations. The wave of spiritual progress recedes, but even in receding it is gaining power and volume to return and to rush further in. Evil then can claim no empire over the soul of man. God has set a limitation to the defaction of his own church. When the night is the darkest, the dawn is on the way (Burns, *Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders*, p. 12).

Revival, God's Law of Progress

Horace Bushnell, who was converted in the Great Revival, wrote in 1838: "Revivals are a part

of the divine economy. . . . Progress, the law of all God's works, involves variety and change. Spring is first staged a progress. . . . In fact there is no reason to doubt that God, in framing the plan or system of his spiritual agencies, ordained fluctuations and changing types of spiritual exercise, that he might take advantage, at intervals, of novelty in arresting and swaying the mind of men. . . . If one expects to carry on the cause of salvation by a steady rolling on the same dead level, and fears continuously lest the axles wax hot and kindle a flame, he is too timorous to hold the reins of the Lord's chariot." (Quoted by Fish from *Quarterly Christian Spectator* [1838], *Handbook of Revivals*, p. 116.)

In the inevitable recoil which follows revivals, the spiritual ebb tide never reaches the low level which preceded the previous revival. It is a declension which looms large when contrasted with the high level reached by the preceding incoming flood tide. It is the ebb of a constantly advancing tide. "The church today stands in a different attitude. It is possessed of a clearer vision and is surrounded by a more enlightened public opinion. The church today could not fall so low as in past days as it falls from a loftier height. It may reveal in its defection none of the old abuses, in this respect may compare favorably with even the best periods in other and earlier epochs; but this standard of judgment is false. Each age has its own standard, and by that standard the church may be condemned of pitiful defection even while in comparison of

other ages, full of good works" (Burns, *Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders*, p. 12).

Watchman, What of the Night?

Burns diagnoses the present situation when he says: "First of all no one pretends it is well with the church today. When every allowance is made for exaggeration there is enough left to arouse deep searching of heart. On every side there is complaint of the church's loss of spiritual power, of the increasing indifference of the people toward her services and of a startling decrease in her membership. Where there is not decline, there is at least a conscious arrest of her influence, and in the world a widespread hostility to her claims. It is not that the church is inert. Never before was there more activity and less result. There is abundant energy, but it is not conquering energy conscious of its power, but feverish energy conscious of its impotence. Nor is it that the pulpit is asleep. Never was learning more widespread and never has the pulpit reached a higher average of ability and culture. Nevertheless, the message of the pulpit has largely lost its power to convince and the preacher his power to convert.

"When we look beneath the surface we see much to account for this. We have been passing through an age of commercialism. Never before in the history of the world have the hearts of men been set with such a passion of avarice, upon material things, and this has deadened men's hearts, as it must always do, to the gospel of renunciation. . . . It is

more than a fear that the church has not escaped from its corrupting spirit; that the love of wealth, of ease, the palliation of commercial immorality, the pampering of the wealthy, and the neglect of the poor, the judging of things according to material standards have been allowed to creep in and to devitalize her spiritual witness. . . .

“Another reason for the present state of impotence which characterizes the church today arises from the fact that we have been passing through an age of theological unrest, in the shifting of our foundations and of prolonged theological conflict. It is an age of transition, and all transition periods are periods of suffering.

“The unrest in this sphere of belief has risen through the scientific revival which has characterized the second half of the past century. Amazing indeed have been the results. Science has broken through the barriers of the skies, it has bound lightning to its chariot, has wrested from nature a thousand secrets, and with impatient curiosity has forced every door of knowledge.

“The results of these changes have been for many the unsettling of belief, for many others the loss of faith, and for all a certain hesitation regarding even the most central doctrines. It has introduced into the pulpit a certain conscious uncertainty as of men who were not quite sure of their ground. A disposition has grown to leave many of the disputed doctrines alone, and fall back upon moral precepts and the inculcation of good living.

“The result is that much, if not all that is most distinctive and life-giving in the message of Christianity has been lost; passion is simulated; earnestness is often directed toward useless things, and men in the pew, even though they do not consciously realize it, yet are unconsciously affected by the absence of the note of certainty and intense conviction.

“So pulpit and pew are united in common mis-giving; men find it easy in the midst of declining ideals, to drift from the church; their conscience is unaffected by their relapse, because there is little of that atmosphere of reality, which thinks in spiritual things the neglect of God’s house an awful thing. A weakened church means the strengthening of every influence which make for man’s undoing and no heart escapes the sorrow” (Burns, *Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders*, pp. 44-46).

In such an hour the church would do well to familiarize itself with the history of the great revivals, and with the laws which govern their genesis and progress. Andover, the first American Protestant theological seminary, had in its early years a “Revival Association.” These students studied the history of revivals. The leaders considered this to be the best method in their day to produce revival preachers and revivals. The memory of the Great Prayer-meeting Revival (1857-1860) was an important factor leading to the revival of 1904-05 in Wales.

Bishop Candler, referring to certain books dealing with revivals in America, writes, “Nothing out-

side of the Bible could contribute more directly to the promotion of revival than a general prayerful perusal of these highly and exceedingly stimulating treatises'' (Candler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*).

In this present time of great spiritual depression, it is becoming apparent that a great revival of religion is a national necessity. We therefore do well to acquaint ourselves with what God did in a similar period of our history. What He did then He can do again. The story of the Great Revival (1800-1842) should kindle faith and hope, and promote measures which might hasten another great spiritual awakening.

Chapter II.

THE GREAT DECLINE

“THE closing years of the eighteenth century show the lowest low-water mark of the lowest ebb tide of spiritual life in the history of the American church.” This statement, made by Leonard Bacon, was not a fictitious indictment serving as a darkened shadow to increase the brightness of The Great Revival which changed conditions and gave Christianity an impetus which is felt even to the present time.

Dorchester writes of this period, “The last two decades of the eighteenth century were the darkest period spiritually and morally, in the history of American Christianity.”

The New England States in 1798 had a population of 1,300,000, with the Congregational Church in the majority in every State. There were 330 of their churches to 88 Baptist, 30 Universalist, 6 Quaker and 11 Episcopal churches. Outside of New England the eleven remaining States had a population of 4,000,000.

Our western boundary followed the Mississippi. There were four territories: The territory northwest of the Ohio, the territory of Indians, the territory south of Tennessee and territory of Mississippi. The present site of Washington, D. C., was the center of population. The northern half and

western third of New York State were practically unsettled. The remaining portion of what is now the United States territory was divided equally between France and Spain.

Decline in the Older Settlements

There was a great breakdown in the morals of the people in the older settlements, and a general spiritual decline within the churches. The French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War had greatly disturbed the minds of the people. It had accustomed them to disregard of the Lord's Day. It had interrupted the regular ministry of the churches. Then rolled in the tide of skepticism from France, the more easily yielded to by our people, because they had just formed a special affection for the country of Lafayette. Voltaire and Volney and Paine were welcomed by leading minds as emancipators from religious tyranny, the proper sequel of political emancipation. To some it seemed as if the eternal night was settling down on the world."

Influence of French Infidelity

There was reason, as in Russia today, for relating the relentless despotism under which the French people suffered to the church and religion of their country. The church had sided with the oppressor. Infidelity was the protest against this unholy alliance. People did not differentiate between the true and the false in religion and in the church. Dorchester writes, "There was one extenuating condition, which, however, only became

more deceptive and ruinous. In France, infidelity was largely a revolt against a most gigantic and relentless despotism with which religion had become identified during a long period of papal intrigue and misrule; and the revolutions which it instigated were professedly in the interest of popular deliverance.

“By gibes and jeers corrupting the moral sensibilities, by shining sophistries and soft subtleties of sentiment releasing the moral sense, by specious generalities upon personal liberty and freedom of thought sifted into literature, then everywhere eagerly sought for, French infidelity went forth to intoxicate the world with its delicious dreams. Men laughed at the brilliant satanic wit of Voltaire, wept in sympathy with the exquisite romance of Rousseau and stood in wonder, or followed in hesitating thought those master magicians, the Encyclopedists, as they pursued their problem of reconstructing the universe without a God. It summoned to its aid the handmaids of the highest culture; criticism dipped her pen in venom and performed its most destructive service; art chiseled its ideas in marble, traced them in glowing colors upon canvass, and warbled in most entrancing strings; a poetry invested them with charms of the imagination and measure; history became a colored glass and vitiated the testimony of the past; while philosophy degraded herself to the profane vocation of undermining human society with the specious pretense of imagination” (Dorchester, *Christianity in the United States*, pp. 313, 314).

Dr. Timothy Dwight, president of Yale, wrote in his *Travels*, "Youths particularly who had been liberally educated, and who, with strong passions and feeble principles, were votaries of sensuality and ambition, delighted in the prospect of unrestrained gratification, and, panting to be enrolled with men of passion and splendor, became enamored with the new doctrines. The tenor of opinion, and even of conversation, was to a considerable extent changed at once. Striplings scarcely fledged suddenly found that the world had been enveloped in general darkness through the long succession of preceding ages, and that the light of wisdom had just begun to dawn upon the human race. All the science, all the information that had been acquired before the last thirty or forty years stood in their view for nothing. Experience they boldly proclaimed a plotting instructress who taught in manners, morals and government nothing but abecedarian lessons fitted for children only. Religion they discovered, on the one hand, to be the vision of dotards and nurses, and, on the other, a system of fraud and trick, imposed by priestcraft for base purposes upon the ignorant multitude. Revelation was found to be without authority or evidence, and moral obligation a cobweb which might indeed entangle flies, but by which creatures with stronger wing nobly disdained to be confined. The world they resolutely concluded to have been, probably eternal, and matter the only existence. Man, they determined, sprung like a mushroom out of the earth like a chemical process; and the power of

thinking, choice and motivity were merely the result of elective affinities. If, however, there was a God, and man was a creative being, he was created only to be happy. As, therefore, animal pleasure is the only happiness, so they resolved that the enjoyment of that pleasure is the only end of his creation" (Timothy Dwight, *Travels*, Vol. IV., pp. 376, 379, 380).

Statesmen and scholars were among the first in America to be lured by this siren of infidelity. It grew in the new atmosphere of liberty and self-government, and was the more acceptable because France had been their ally in the late war. Bishop Mead said of Virginia: "Infidelity was rife in the state. . . . the clergy for the most part were a laughing stock or objects of disgust."

General Dearborn, Secretary of War under Jefferson, declared: "So long as these temples stand, (alluding to the churches,) we can not hope for order and good government." Passing by a church in Connecticut, he was heard to exclaim, "Look at that painted nuisance." Gen. Charles Lee, noted for his infidelity, made provision in his will, "not to bury him in any church or church yard or within a mile of any Presbyterian or Anabaptist meeting-house." Most of the professional men, exposed to the contagion, became hostile to Christianity.

However, not all the statesmen and philosophers of this period were infidels. Washington and Patrick Henry escaped the contagion. Patrick Henry had an abhorrence for infidelity, and wrote an unpublished work against Paine's *Age of Reason*.

Washington sensed the danger and sounded a note of alarm in his farewell address: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who would labor to subvert these great pillars of the duties of men and of citizens. The mere politician equally with the pious man ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. . . . Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion."

John Adams, President of the United States in 1800, received a letter from Germany, proposing to introduce into this country "a company of school masters, painters, poets, etc., all of whom were disciples of Thomas Paine." Adams replied in no uncertain manner: "I had rather countenance the introduction of Ariel and Caliban, with a troop of spirits, the most mischievous from the fairy land."

Benjamin Franklin has been wrongly classed with the opponents of Christianity, and is quoted by some as the patron of Paine's infidelity. The following citation from Spark's *Life and Works of Benjamin Franklin* shows how false is that aspersion. Declining to print a manuscript of Paine's, he wrote him as follows: ". . . Though your reasonings are subtle and may prevail with some readers yet you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject and the consequence of printing this piece will be a great

deal of odium, drawn on yourself, mischief to you and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face.

“But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life without the assistance afforded by religion, you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue and the disadvantages of vice and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to resist common temptations. But think how great a proportion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women and of inexperienced, inconsiderate youth of both sexes who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue and retain them in the practice of it until it become habitual, which is the great point of security.

“And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank of our most distinguished authors. For among us it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a youth be raised to the company of men should prove his manhood by beating his mother.

“I would advise you not to attempt unchain-
ing the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is
seen by any other person: whereby you will save
yourself a great deal of mortification by the ene-
mies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good

deal of regret and repentance. If men are so wicked with religion, what would they be without it?"

In *An Early Memoir of Thomas Jefferson*, published in 1800, we read: "A Society of Illuminate, or, more properly called by themselves Illumines, have been established in Virginia. It consisted of one hundred members, had its regular officers, as well as members, and was set afoot in 1786 by the Grand Orient of France. From this Society a deputy was sent to France in order to hold communication between infidels and Revolutionists in both countries, and to give the American Society its instructions. In New York there was another Society of the same kind, out of which fourteen others sprung."

President Adams, in a proclamation, referred to the dangers which threatened the country: "The most precious interests of the United States are still held in jeopardy by the hostile designs and insidious acts of a foreign nation (France) as well as by the dissemination among them of those principles subversive of the foundation of all religious, moral and social obligations that have produced incalculable mischief and misery in other countries."

Timothy Dwight calls attention to the bad as well as the good reports from Europe: "From France, Germany and Great Britain the dregs of infidelity were vomited upon us. From the *System de La Nature*, and the *Philosophical Dictionary*, down to the *Political Justice* of Godwin, and the *Age of Reason*, the whole mass of pollu-

tion was emptied upon this country. The last two publications flowed in upon us as a deluge."

It has been asserted upon good authority that the infidels of France raised among themselves three million francs for the purpose of printing, purchasing and distributing books to corrupt the minds of the people in America.

Spiritual Decline in American Colleges

The effect of this decline was noticeable in American colleges. They had become hotbeds of infidelity, although they had been brought into existence as nurseries for the training of spiritual leadership for church and state.

Infidelity dominated the College of William and Mary in Virginia. It was regarded as a veritable hotbed of French infidelity and of irreligion. Bishop Mead, of Virginia, wrote: "I can truly say that then and for many years after, in every educated young man in Virginia, whom I met, I expected to find a skeptic, if not an avowed unbeliever." Harvard College went far in liberalism, which reached its climax in 1805, when they elected Henry Ware, an avowed Unitarian, to the divinity professorship, which was founded by Thomas Hollis, a devout Baptist of London. Yale also succumbed to the infection. Timothy Dwight, when he came to the presidency in 1795, found the institution honeycombed with atheistical clubs. Princeton, in 1792, had only one student who professed to be a Christian. Dr. Ashbell Green, who entered Princeton in 1782, wrote: "While I was a member of the

college, there were but two professors of religion among the students." Prof. Thomas Cooper, a rank infidel, infected every institution he touched, notably the University of Pennsylvania, South Carolina College and Dickinson College.

Decline in Western Territories

If the religious decline in the more settled Eastern States was so great, what could be expected in the new territories on the Western frontier? Here all the influence of old established churches were missing. An aggressive infidelity was there. Some of the towns were named after infidels, such as Altamont, Bourbon and Rousseau, in Kentucky. The Kentucky Legislature in 1793 dispensed with the services of a chaplain, deeming it unnecessary.

Peter Cartwright, the great Methodist itinerant, wrote: "Logan County, Kentucky, when my father moved to Kentucky, was called Rogue's Harbor. Here many refugees from all parts of the Union fled to escape punishment or justice, for, although there was law, it could not be executed, and it was a desperate state of society. Murderers, horse thieves, highway robbers, and counterfeiters, fled there, until they combined and actually formed a majority. Those who favored a better state of morals were called regulators, but they encountered fierce opposition from the rogues. A battle was fought with guns, pistols, dirks, knives and clubs in which the regulators were defeated."

In this prerevival period in the vast territory comprised of western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky,

Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi, there were, according to authoritative reports, groups of twenty to fifty thousand people isolated without a church or preacher of any denomination. The church had failed to keep up with the advancing tide of immigration. On the contrary, infidelity with its bible, *The Age of Reason*, was everywhere in this Western country.

There was a similar spiritual destitution in western New York and Michigan. It was then a common saying, "Religion had not gone west of the Genesee River." Some of the towns were hotbeds of infidelity, and the books of Paine, Voltaire, etc., were widely scattered.

"In proportion as France was loved, England was hated. Whatever was good and pure in the morals and religion of England was spurned because it was English, while the wretched licentiousness and bold outspoken infidelity of France was sanctified by the charming euphony of the French Republic.

"Certain local causes induced a stronger attachment to France in the West than in the East. Kentucky was probably more enthusiastically and blindly attached to the French than was any other part of the United States. The hope and purpose of the Kentuckians to form an alliance with the French Republic and share with it the glory of giving liberty to an enslaved world in general, and to the Spanish settlers of Louisiana in particular, was defeated by the recall of the French Minister, Genet" (Spencer, *History of Kentucky Baptists*).

Voltaire's works were translated and circulated among the more cultured people of the West. Volney, the infidel, visited America in 1795, and remained for three years. The most widely circulated book was Paine's *Age of Reason*. His style was coarse and vulgar, but direct. Paine, the son of pious Quaker people, was born in England. Coming to America just prior to the Revolutionary War, he espoused the cause of the Colonists. In 1776 he published *Common Sense, a Patriotic Pamphlet*.

Paine went to France on the eve of their struggle and revolution. Here the hatred of Christianity and revealed religion was their strongest passion. He decided to write a book against the Bible. This book was of no consequence in France, where more brilliant writers had written on the same theme.

The Infidel Boast

Paine wrote: "I have gone through the Bible as a man would go through the wood with an ax and felled the trees. Here they lie and the priests may replant them, but they will never grow."

Voltaire boasted that within thirty years after his death the Bible would have passed into "the limbo of forgotten literature." The Bible continues to be the best seller. Voltaire's home at present has been converted into a Bible distributing depot.

The Fruits of Infidelity

The story of the moral degeneration of the members of one of the many infidel clubs shows the fruitage of infidelity. Dorchester quotes this story:

“They claim the right to indulge in lasciviousness: and to recreate themselves as their propensities and appetites should dictate. Those who composed this association, says the writer, were my neighbors, some of them were my schoolmates. I knew them well both before and after they become members. I marked their conduct, and saw and knew their ends. Their number was about twenty men and seven females . . . of these some were shot, some hung, some drowned; two destroyed themselves by intemperance, one of whom was eaten by dogs and the other by hogs; one committed suicide; one fell from his horse and was killed; and one was struck with an ax and bled to death. . . . Joshua Miller was a teacher of infidelity and was shot off a stolen horse by Colonel J. Woodhull. N. Miller, his brother, was shot off a log while he was playing at cards on First Day morning, by Jebel June, in a scouting party for robbers. Benjamin Kelly was shot off his horse, by a boy, the son of the murdered, for the murder of one Clark; he lay above ground until the crows picked his bones. J. Smith committed suicide by stabbing himself while he was in prison for crime. W. Smith was shot by B. Thorpe and others for robbery. S. T. betrayed his own confidential friend for five dollars; his friend was hung, and himself afterward was shot by D. Lancaster, said to be an accident. I heard the report of the gun and saw the blood. J. A. was shot by Michael Coleman for robbing Abimel Young. J. V. was shot by a company of militia. J. D., in one of his drunken fits,

lay out and was chilled to death. J. B. was hanged for stealing a horse. J. M. was shot by a Continental guard for not coming to when hailed by the guard. C. S. was hung for the murder of Major Nathaniel Strong. J. Smith and J. Vervillon were hung for robbing John Sackett. W. K. was hung for stealing clothes. One other individual was hung for murder. . . . W. Clark drank himself to death; he was eaten by the hogs before his bones was found and they were known by his clothing. He was once a member of respectable standing in a Presbyterian Church. While he remained with them and regarded their rules and regulations, he was exemplary, industrious, sober, and respectable: and not until he became an infidel did he become a vagabond. His bones, clothing and jug were found in a cornfield belonging to John Coffee, and they were buried without a coffin. J. A. Sr., died in the woods, his wine jug at his side. He was not found until a dog brought home one of his legs . . . J. H., the last I shall mention in connection with that group, died in a drunken fit.

“The conduct of the females who associated with this gang was such as to illustrate its practical effect upon them. . . . I shall only say that not one of them could or would pretend to know who was the father of their offspring. Perhaps hell itself could not produce more disgusting objects than were some of them” (Dorchester, *Problem of Religious Progress*, pp. 182, 183).

If infidelity should be judged by its fruits, then the later years of Paine's life would serve as a real

example. McMaster, in his *History of the People of the United States*, describes Paine at the close of his career: "We doubt whether any name in our Revolutionary history, not excepting that of Benedict Arnold, is quite so odious as the name of Thomas Paine. Arnold was a traitor, Paine was an infidel. . . . He was one of the most remarkable men of his time. It would be difficult to find anywhere such a compound of baseness and nobleness, of goodness and badness, of greatness and littleness, of so powerful a mind left unbalanced and led astray by the worst of animal passions. . . . Of all the human kind, he is the filthiest and the nastiest, and his disgusting habits grew upon him with his years. In his old age, when the frugal gifts of two states, which remembered his good work, placed him beyond immediate want, he was a sight to behold. It was rare that he was sober; it was still rarer that he washed himself, and he suffered his nails to grow till, in the language of the one who knew him well, they resembled the claws of birds. What gratitude was, he did not know."

Our National Existence Endangered

Infidel philosophy does not build national life. Advocating personal liberty it boasts of casting off the fetters upon the conscience and the shackles of moral obligations put on them by bigotry and priestcraft. The ship of state in America traveled on stormy seas in those days. There was a condition of moral bankruptcy in America. Our national existence was in jeopardy.

An intimate friend wrote to Washington in 1796: "Our affairs seem to lead to some crisis, some revolution; something that I can not foresee or conjecture. I am more uneasy than during the war."

In reply, Washington wrote: "Your sentiment that we are rapidly drawing to a crisis accords with mine. What the event will be, is beyond my foresight."

There was a weakening of the marriage ties, which threatened the home. About that time the press contained hundreds of advertisements to locate runaway wives. Letters and packages were opened and read by mail carriers. Important business had to be done in cypher. Duelling increased. Drunkenness never before or since was so prevalent. In eighteen years our population increased twofold and our distilleries sixfold.

A Weakened Church

Side by side with this growing infidelity was decline in the spiritual life of our churches. Joel Parker, writing of his church at West Hartford, Conn., said: "The admissions into the communion were no more than five for the whole past four years. It seemed as if God had almost entirely withdrawn his gracious influence. We were left to mourn an absent God, barren ordinances, unsuccessful Gospel and cold Hearts."

Methodism was checked in its aggressive work. In the three years—1793, 1794 and 1795—they suffered an average loss of about four thousand members annually. That was a total loss of 11,160.

There was a general decline in all the churches at the close of the century. The Episcopal Church was the church of the losing party in the Revolutionary War. "From the point of view of the Episcopalian," writes Bacon, "the prospect was even more disheartening. It was at this time that the Bishop of New York laid down his function, not expecting the church to continue much longer; and Bishop Madison, of Virginia, shared the despairing conviction of Chief Justice Marshall, that the church was too far gone to be revived." Over all this period the historian of the Lutheran Church writes, "Deterioration."

"We are fast becoming a nation of drunkards," wrote Joel Parker. "We could ascertain that there were three hundred thousand drunkards in our land, and that from ten to twenty thousand were annually consigned to drunkards' graves. . . . For several years past errors have prevailed in the United States to an astonishing degree. Piety seems to be flying away from our land; religion declined, morality extinguished, vice grew bold, profaneness, revelling, dishonesty and sinful amusements greatly increasing, universalism, infidelity, atheism, scoffing at all serious godliness, contempt for the holy Sabbath, deflections of public worship, omission of family religion and disregard of divine ordinances, have spread in a degree, which calls for tears of grief, threatening in progress to waste all of the most valuable interests of Society.

"The love of gain had begun and is still our besetting sin. This passion gains on our country-

men and they forget all other things. They forsake the home of their fathers; they wander away from the schools and churches to the wilderness of the west; they go from the sound of the Sabbath bell and forget the Sabbath, the Bible and the place of prayer; they leave the place where their fathers sleep in their graves and they forget the religion which sustained and comforted them. They go in for gold and they wander over the prairie; they fell the forest; they ascend the streams in pursuit of it. . . . What can meet this state of things and arrest the evils that spread with the fleetness of the courier or the wind; What can pursue and overtake these wanderers but revivals of religion? . . . In such circumstances God has interposed; and he has thus blessed our own land and times with signal revivals of religion" (Parker, *Revival Sermon*).

Bishop Candler asks what source of deliverance could the church look to in such an hour. It could not in Western lands look to law, for there was little or none of it; it could not look to education, for these remote settlers had neither the taste for nor the means of applying their remedy. They could not expect anything from a lifeless or formal ritualistic Christianity. "Nothing but a revival of religion like the saving tide of the great awakening which swept over the early colonies, and the redeeming waves of the Wesleyan revival which purified Great Britain, could cleanse the western territory of its foulness, and such a revival came in 1800" (Candler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*, p. 176).

Chapter III.

GOD'S PEOPLE CALLED TO PRAYER

IN common with all historic revivals, prayer preceded The Great Revival. When the hour was darkest, God raised up a praying minority. The need was so great that only a revival of the supernatural could change conditions. This supernatural power, the gift and work of the Holy Spirit, was released through prayer, as on the day of Pentecost and in subsequent revivals.

Like the unseen roots of the tree, the important factor in great revivals, the hidden mystical secret, has not always been recognized by the historian. There was a marked absence of human leadership in The Great Revival. There was no Wesley, no Whitefield, no Luther, around whose personality the movement centered. The Great Revival was under the invisible command of the Holy Spirit. Prayer correctly related the church of that day to this superb and supernatural leadership.

Burns, writing of revivals in general, described this situation: "The next period in the inner history of revivals is characterized by a profound sense of dissatisfaction awaking in many hearts. A period of gloom sets in, a weariness and exhaustion invade the heart, the pleasures of the world no longer satisfy, they set up a deep distaste and satiety. Sick in soul man turns with a sigh to God;

dimly they awake to the consciousness that, in bartering heavenly for earthly joys they have encountered irremediable loss; that in the decay of spiritual vision the world has lost its soul of loveliness. Slowly this aching grows, the heart of man begins to cry out for God, for spiritual certainties, for fresh visions. From a faint desire this widens until it becomes a great human need; until in its urgency, it seems to beat with violence at the very gates of heaven.

“Within the church itself, also, throughout all its day of defection, there have been many who have not bowed the knee to Baal, who have mourned its loss of spiritual power, and who have never ceased to pray earnestly for a revival of its spiritual life. Gradually, however, their numbers are found to increase; prayer becomes more urgent and more confident. . . . Men begin to gather in companies to pray. They cease not to importune God, day and night, often with tears beseeching him to visit them with his divine power. In many different places, quite unconnected with each other, the spirit of intercession awakes and with it an expectancy that will not be denied, a premonition that there is at hand the dawn of a new day” (Burns, *Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders*, pp. 13, 14).

The “Circular Letter”—Call to Prayer

A group of twenty-three New England ministers, including Stephen Gano, of Providence, and Isaac Backus, of Middleboro, issued a “Circular

Letter," calling the ministers, and, through them, the churches, to pray for a revival. They had the precedent of two similar historic calls of the same character. One was issued by ministers in Scotland in 1746; a little later, the other by Jonathan Edwards. These calls entered largely into the kindling of revival fires in Scotland and in the United States. This Circular Letter contains the following interesting paragraphs, showing it was based on these former calls to prayer:

"To the ministers and churches of every Christian denomination in the United States, to unite in their endeavors to carry into execution the humble attempt to promote explicit agreement and visible union of God's people in extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom on earth.

"In execution of this plan, it is proposed that the ministers and churches of every Christian denomination should be invited to maintain public prayer and praise, accompanied with such instruction from God's Word, as might be judged proper, on every first Tuesday, of the four quarters of the year, beginning with the first Tuesday of January, 1795, at two o'clock in the afternoon, if the plan of concert should then be ripe for a beginning, and so continuing from quarter to quarter, and from year to year, until the good providence of God prospering our endeavors, we shall obtain the blessing for which we pray."

This proposition for a nation-wide "Concert of Prayer" met with cordial response. This came be-

cause earnest souls believed the only hope of the church was in a revival from God. Dr. Green, of Princeton, replied: "The plan for a concert has my most cordial approbation, and I shall endeavor by all means in my power to carry it into effect. Our presbytery will meet in a fortnight from the present time, when I hope, if my life and health are spared, to lay it before them. I pray and hope that the contemplated union in prayer may be the presage of good."

In a similar way Bishop Elwine, of the Moravian Church, responded from Bethlehem, Pa., Oct. 9, 1794: "It was as though I did hear David call, 'O, pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper who love thee.' We have the promise of our Lord that every two or three who agree to pray for anything in his name shall be heard and their prayer granted. I can only answer for myself. I promise faithfully and regularly to appear before the Lord with my prayer, and will make my beginning the first Tuesday in January next and will continue so to do every first Tuesday the four quarters of the year, and will encourage my brethren to do the same."

Theodore Hinsdale, moderator of the North Association of Hartford County, Conn., wrote a lengthy letter in response to the appeal. In this he said: "We are highly delighted with the piety of the design and anxious that success may attend the proposal. We, as an Association would with our brethren, in our respective associations of this state take up the matter and act upon it so far as to refer it

to the general association of this state and by their commissioners to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, . . . that such general measures be taken or adopted as may promise to give the proposed concert the most extensive diffusion."

The Presbytery of New York and the Synods of New York and of New Jersey recommended the Circular Letter call to all their churches. They also called for a day of fasting and prayer. The Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church did likewise. In the study of the widespread revival which followed, one notes many allusions to this "Concert of Prayer." The response was general among the denominations and their churches in all sections of the country. The church in the darkest hour of its night of declension had found the way out. Their feet had been placed in the pathway to prayer which inevitably leads to revival.

Bangs, in his *History of Methodism*, writes of this fact: "Solemn exhortation to the church followed, to be read from all the pulpits, and a day of prayer and fasting followed. . . . The first Tuesday of every quarter was observed for this purpose, from 1796, to the close of the century. On the first Tuesday in March, in 1796, the Methodist Episcopal Church observed a general day of fasting and prayer for the same reasons."

On the Western frontiers "Covenants were entered into by Christian people to spend the third Saturday in each month in fasting and prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and one half hour

at sunset every Saturday night and at sunrise every Sunday morning for the same object."

In the minutes of the Shaftesbury Baptist Association for 1795, the following item was recorded: "Item 13. Whereas, a number of well disposed people on this continent have agreed to unite in a general concert of prayer, for the outpouring of God's Spirit, on the first Tuesdays of January, April, July and October; this Association, with heartfelt satisfaction, approves of the same. We, therefore, recommend the observance of said days to the churches which we represent. In this concert, we hope there will be no distinction of denomination but that all will unite in the love and fear of God."

Thus the prayer movement was promoted, under associational leadership. The Districts, the Synods, the Presbyteries and the Associations led their respective churches into a great intercessory movement. It became general and led to a widespread revival.

There were little praying groups all over the country. A revival was in the hands of these intercessory minorities. In after years, Rev. E. Porter, D.D., of Andover, wrote a series of letters on revivals to the "Revival Association" of Andover Seminary. This was an organization of students which met to study the history of revivals. Their leaders believed that "to cherish the spirit of revivalism in our seminaries is the direct way to multiply revival ministers." Writing of The Great Revival, Dr. Porter tells of "Aaron and Hur So-

cieties'' formed in the churches to hold up the hands of the ministers through intercession. These praying people met prior to the Sunday services. Groups of young men also met here and there to pray for other young men. Groups of parents met to pray for their children's conversion. The great need for God's help everywhere was driving loyal Christian people to prayer. Man's extremity thus became God's opportunity. With such an atmosphere a revival was inevitable. It met a national necessity.

Chapter IV.

THE GREAT REVIVAL IN EASTERN STATES

THE claim that The Great Revival originated on the Western frontiers is an error commonly made by some writers. There was a noticeable evidence of a supernatural power working simultaneously in various sections of the country. Dr. Edward O. Griffin, president of Williams College, wrote: "About the year 1792 commenced three series of events sufficiently important to constitute a new era. That year blood began to flow in Europe; at Kettering, England, there came into being the first in a continuous series of societies, which have covered the whole face of the Protestant world, and introduced the age of missions and of active benevolence. And that year, or the year before, began the unbroken series of American revivals." Dr. Griffin tells of a revival at North Yarmouth, Me., in 1791; one at Lee, in the Berkshires, in 1792. Writing in 1839, he says: "Revivals have never ceased since then. . . . I saw a continued succession of heavenly sprinklings at New Salem, Farmington, Middlebury and New Hartford, Conn., until in 1799 I could stand at my door at New Hartford, Litchfield County, and number fifty or sixty congregations laid down in one field of divine wonders and as many more in different parts of New England."

There was a great revival at New Hartford, Litchfield, Conn., in the fall of 1795. Dr. Griffin tells the story: "On the fourth of November I went to the house of God, saying, 'My soul, wait thou only, ONLY, ONLY upon God, for my expectation is from him.' During the morning I scarcely looked at the audience and cared not whether they were asleep or awake, feeling that the question of a revival did not lie between me and them, but was to be settled in heaven."

Preaching on "Jesus of Nazareth Was Passing By," he alluded to the awful prospect for sinners in the middle life, if another revival should not come in twelve or fifteen years. "I seemed to take eternal leave of families out of Christ," said he; "I came near falling. I thought I should be obliged to stop, but I was carried through. It was apparent next day that a revival had come. A dozen families were under conviction. In the course of the winter and next year a hundred were hopefully added to the Lord."

These were some of the early sprinklings preceding the great revival showers which covered all parts of the country during the next four decades.

Charles G. Finney was born in this district that very year. An interesting question arises as to what influence this revival may have had on his later career as a great revivalist. It is worthy of notice that other great revivalists were born in the same decade. This list includes Edward N. Kirk, born 1793; Daniel Baker, 1793; Jabez Swan, 1793; Jacob Knapp, 1794; Thomas Sheardown, 1799.

Revival Reports

A number of small volumes appeared with reports of revivals in the East. From these we cite a few typical instances of revivals in local churches.

One of the first books to appear was *Glorious News, A Brief Account of the Late Revival in New England and Also in Nova Scotia*, by S. C. Ustick.

S. W. writes to a friend at Windham, Oct. 1, 1798: "God is carrying on a glorious work in several towns in these parts. The work began in Mansfield, first society, about five or six months ago in a very gradual manner, but soon took a very rapid spread in the west part of the town. . . . The Spirit of the Lord seemed to sweep all before it, like an overflowing flood, though with very little noise or crying out. It is wonderful to see the surprising alteration of that people in so short a time. I conclude there are no less than a hundred souls converted in that town since the work began."

This writer adds the following comment: "We may say in the midst of judgment God is showing himself marvelously good and kind; and, as it seemed our land a few months ago was fully ripe for destruction, and the hot thunderbolts of divine wrath were hanging over our heads, yet God has made a rich display of his Grace in the conversion of so many souls."

Rev. J. B. writes from Hartford, Feb. 6, 1799, to a friend in Newburyport, Mass.: "The spirit of hearing in Hartford is greater than any representation which has been made. Young people of both

sexes flock by hundreds, and the prospect is flattering in the extreme. Conference meetings are held every night in private houses. In Mr. Strong's Society, sixty are thought to be under conviction. . . . Hundreds are under some serious concern, while hundreds more stand astonished and are ready to cry, 'What meaneth this?' . . . The sacred flame has spread into many neighboring towns."

Another book, published at this time to report the progress of the revival, was entitled *A Brief Account of the Late Revival of Religion in a Number of Towns in New England*. The following story comes from Shaftsbury, Vt., Feb. 21, 1799: "There appeared amongst the people the most rapid increase of every species of vice and immorality, and even professors had grown cold to religious exercises. . . . The baptism of a young woman in July was the occasion for a revival. Four more were baptized. In September there were seventeen others. Later two days were spent in examination of converts. Forty-eight were then baptized in one day. On the next Sabbath, twenty-nine; next, sixteen; next, thirteen; Zion's gates were truly then thronged with converts. Since May, one hundred and seventy-five were received, twenty-five by letter and one hundred and fifty by baptism." There was an absence of physical excitement.

"It was surprising to me, that scarcely a single instance appeared of overheated zeal or flight of passion. Both the sinners under conviction and those newly brought into the liberty of the gospel conversed in the meetings with the greatest free-

dom. They spoke one at a time a few words. They spoke low."

The following story is found in *A Faithful Narrative of a Revival of Religion at Bridgehampton, in the Year 1800*. "There had begun to be lurking principles of infidelity in the town. It was in February, 1799, that a spirit of prayer began to manifest itself among the people of God, and speedily a solicitude for the soul began to pervade the minds of many. Forty or fifty persons were supposed to be under serious impressions and fifteen were hopefully made the subjects of a new life, beside a number now comforted, who for many years had through fear of death been subject to bondage. In the course of the summer these hopeful beginnings of a work of God began to decline. A spirit of prayer however still continued and, in the fall, our hopes were made to revive. Instances of apparent conviction for sin now became more and more apparent until the first of January, 1800. On this day, according to annual custom, public worship was attended and a sermon preached in the sanctuary. It was the evening succeeding this day that the power of the Highest came down and from this time for a number of weeks, the work was powerful, glorious. Eighty were converted. The moral effects were salutary; the division in the church was healed; attention to services greatly increased; various immoralities were stopped and family worship was observed in the homes. It is not the practice of my people to pronounce one another converted. The general term has been,

such a one by mercy hopes he or she hath obtained light and comfort.”

Revival in First Baptist Church, Boston, Mass.

Dr. N. S. Woods, in his *History of the First Baptist Church of Boston*, tells of the revival in the two Baptist Churches in that city: “A weekly union meeting had been held in the vestry of the First Church for some time, of which ministry the two societies took charge in turn. A great seriousness became manifest, and, without apparent reason for it, the vestry was uncomfortably crowded with solemn people. Baptisms became frequent. At length, the main audience room of the church was used and soon failed to accommodate the throng of anxious people. All through the winter, even in the severest storms, the church was crowded. During the two years one hundred and thirty-eight were baptized into the fellowship of the First Church, and a still larger number into the Second Church. This remarkable revival occurred at a time when evangelical religion was at an exceedingly low tide in Boston. The Unitarian movement was at its height. All the Congregational Churches in the town had gone over to Unitarianism, except the old South. . . . The Baptist preaching was spiritual, searching and evangelical. It was in no wise affected by the surrounding deflections from the faith. It may be said with truth that under God the Baptists were the means of preserving alive orthodox Congregationalism in Boston.”

It is of interest to note that in 1740 the First Baptist Church was opposed to Whitefield. At that time the other church came into existence as a church believing in revivals. In The Great Revival both were united in purpose, in prayer, in preaching, and in evangelistic victories.

The Revival at West Hartford

Pastor Perkins, of the church in West Hartford, Conn., reviewed the evangelistic history of his church prior to The Great Revival. During the Great Awakening in 1745, forty-two were added to the church in a single year; of these, thirty-six were women. The irregularities of some leaders in that revival offended many, and brought reproach on the whole movement. Pastor Perkins thought it was uncharitable to condemn the whole movement because of these "impure mixtures."

After he became pastor there was a revival in 1781, with sixteen accessions. The admissions for ninety years preceding The Great Revival was well over four hundred and fifty-eight, or a yearly average of five. "In The Great Revival one hundred and eight were added and more were expected. Many of these were in the meridian of life, some are advanced in life and some are quite early youth. There was a good proportion of males as well as females."

Characteristics of the Revival in Eastern States

In the Eastern section of the United States The Great Revival was free from those emotional or

physical accidentals which were prevalent in this territory in the days of Jonathan Edwards, and which prevailed to a great extent in The Great Revival in the Western settlements.

The Great Revival, like the Evangelical Revival in the days of the Wesleys in England, was long in subsiding. Some historians claim it continued for fifty years. It is evident that with greater or lesser degree it continued until 1842. The Millerite Revival at that time, while doing some good, helped to discredit revivals. Like the excesses of Davenport in the Great Awakening, it contributed to its termination. However, The Great Revival was not characterized by any disastrous consequences producing strife and dissension. On the contrary, it was most constructive in its results. This was especially true of the revival in the East.

In the Great Awakening, according to Jonathan Edwards, there were "about as many males as females" among the converts. Previous to this the women had predominated. In the revival of 1798-1808, the converts were generally those in early and middle life, a small proportion of advanced age, a few of extreme old age, and very many young children, scholars of district schools (Porters' *Letters on Revivals*).

Another characteristic of the revival in the East was the suddenness of its rise and the rapidity of its progress. Gardiner Spring, pastor for many years of a Presbyterian Church in New York City, refers in his *Memoirs* to The Great Revival and its widespread and continued influence. "From

the time I entered college, in 1800, down to the year of 1825, there was an uninterrupted series of these celestial visitations speeding over different parts of the land. During the whole of the twenty-five years there was not a month in which we could not point to some village, some city, some seminary of learning and say, 'Behold what God hath wrought'."

Dr. Griffin also bears witness to the sudden and widespread influence of The Great Revival in Newark, N. J.: "The appearance was as if a collection of waters, suspended over the town, had fallen at once and deluged the whole place."

A witness of the work at Rupert, Vt., wrote in a similar vein: "On a sudden, the Spirit of the Lord appeared to come down upon us like a rushing mighty wind. Almost the whole place was shaken at once; scarcely was there a family in which some were not earnestly inquiring what must they do to be saved."

Dr. Cooley, of Granville, Mass., described its influence: "It spread with surprising rapidity through these parts. Christians were animated, sinners were awakened; scoffers were struck silent at the powerful work of the Almighty."

Such reports are suggestive of the far-reaching scope and influence of The Great Revival in the churches of the Eastern States.

Chapter V.

THE GREAT REVIVAL IN EASTERN COLLEGES

DURING this revival period all the existing colleges, with the possible exception of Harvard, enjoyed revivals. Bishop Candler writes of the great revival of religion at Yale: "In 1802 a revival at Yale College shook the institution to its center, and it seemed for a time that the whole mass of students would press into the Kingdom and nearly all the converts entered the ministry." This was doubtless in a great measure due to the efforts of Dr. Timothy Dwight, who, from the moment he came to the presidency (1795), had waged incessant warfare on the skeptical tendencies and theories of the hour, until, according to Lyman Beecher, then a student there, 'all infidelity skulked and hid its head.' Four distinct revivals occurred during his presidency, resulting in the conversion of two hundred and ten young men, not a few of whom subsequently bore distinguished parts in the evangelization of the West. So enduring was his influence over the college that from 1812 to 1837 there were thirteen special revivals, or one every two years, besides several other seasons of more than usual religious interest" (Candler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*, pp. 189, 190).

It is difficult to select any one as the pre-eminent leader in this revival period. However, Bacon

writes: "If to any one, this place of honor belongs to Timothy Dwight, grandson of Jonathan Edwards, whose accession to the presidency of Yale College at the darkest hour in its history, marked the turning point."

Lyman Beecher, who was then a student at Yale, wrote of conditions there and of Dwight's influence: "Before he came, the college was in a most ungodly state. Most of the students were skeptical and rowdies were plentiful. Wine and liquor were kept in many rooms, intemperance, profanity, gambling and licentiousness were common. I hardly know how I escaped. . . . That was the day of the infidelity of the Tom Paine School. . . . To a mind appreciative like mine, the preaching of President Dwight was a continual course of instruction and a continual feast. He was copious and polished in style, though disciplined and logical. There was pith and power of doctrine there, that has not since been surpassed or equalled."

Pres. Timothy Dwight was born at Northampton, Mass., May 14, 1752. He was educated at Yale, graduating in 1769. In 1771 he became tutor at Yale. Later he served as a chaplain in the Revolutionary War. Following this he was the head of an academy at Greenfield, Conn. He was president of Yale from 1795 until his death in 1817.

"His personal influence over young men was great. . . . Everywhere his enthusiasm was contagious, whether with soldiers in camp, among the pupils or in the pulpit. He was an indefatigable worker with an iron will and mighty intellect. . . .

Although firm in his discipline as a teacher, he controlled men by persuasion and reason rather than by sternness and rebuke. He was an organizer by instinct, and himself originated many of the national religious and missionary movements of his day. Roger Sherman placed him next to Washington in the general influence exerted upon America in the early years of the nineteenth century. His writings were read extensively, one series going through forty editions in Great Britain alone. In religious matters the secret of his wonderful power over the hearts of men is not far to seek. He revealed it in an address to one of the graduating classes at Yale. 'Christ,' he said, 'is the only, the true, the living way of access to God. Give up yourselves therefore to him in a cordial confidence and the great work is done' " (H. B. Wright, *Two Centuries of Christian Activities at Yale*, pp. 52, 53).

Dwight faced a serious condition at Yale. "One of the greatest evils under which it suffered was the extensive prevalence of infidelity among the students. This pernicious spirit had been derived from the circumstances of the country at the close of the preceding war. As was natural, it found easy access to the minds of a collection of young men who were fascinated with the ideas of mental as well as political independence, and who were easily induced to shake off what they considered the shackles of habit and superstition." Many of the Yale students assumed the names of infidels and pagan philosophers.

Infidelity, as we have seen, was in the ascendancy. The authorities had not allowed free discussion of debatable subjects. Lyman Beecher, in his reminiscences, tells of a new departure under Dwight: "They thought the faculty were afraid of free discussion. But when they handed President Dwight a list of subjects for class disputation, to their surprise, he selected this: 'Is the Bible the Word of God?' and told them to do their best. They formed into groups, two of which disputed before him each week in the presence of other members of the class and resident graduates. They had not been allowed to debate hitherto on the inspiration of the Scriptures. He enjoined them to treat the subject with respect and reverence. Most of the students took the side of infidelity. When they had finished their discussion he first examined the ground they had taken, proved to them their statement of facts was mistaken or irrelevant; and to their astonishment, convinced them that their acquaintance with the subject was wholly superficial. After this he entered into a direct defense."

Following this he preached a series of sermons in the college chapel in which the whole philosophy of skepticism was answered and overthrown. The climax of these sermons came at the end of the college year. It was customary for the president or the professor of divinity "to deliver a discourse to the candidates for the Baccalaureate on the Sabbath preceding the public commencement." In 1796, Dwight preached on "The Nature and Danger of Infidel Philosophy." His text was Col. 2:8, "Be-

ware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ."

The effect of his sermons, and especially this closing sermon, was phenomenal. "From that moment infidelity was not only without a stronghold, but without a lurking place. To espouse her cause was now as unpopular as before it had been to profess a belief in Christianity. Unable to endure the exposure of argument, she fled from the retreats of learning, ashamed and disgraced." Bishop Hurst has well expressed it: "From that day that the young president faced his students in Yale Chapel, infidelity has been a vanishing force in the history of the American people."

Dwight's Baccalaureate Sermon

In the opening of this famous baccalaureate sermon he said: "The philosophy which has opposed Christianity in every succeeding age has uniformly worn the same character, with that described in the text. It has rested on the same foundations, proceeded from the same disposition, aimed at the same ends and produced the same means. Satisfied with the justice of these assertions, I feel it, young gentlemen, to be my duty on this occasion to exhort you to beware lest you become a prey to the philosophy which opposes the Gospel; to prove to you that this philosophy is vain and deceitful; to show you that you are in danger of becoming a prey to it; and to dissuade you by several arguments from thus yielding yourself a prey."

He showed them that the infidel philosophy of their day was merely a revival of what other philosophers taught. In this sermon he put these philosophers, as it were, in a procession. He made them march, one by one, before his listeners as he unfolded their teaching and the character it produced.

“Mr. Hume declares that man is a mere machine, that is, an object operated on by external causes; that suicide or self-murder is lawful and commendable and of course virtuous; that adultery must be practiced, if we would obtain all the advantages of life; that female infidelity (or adultery) when known is a small thing, when unknown, nothing; that skepticism is the true and only wisdom of man; that it is unreasonable to believe God to be wise and good.

“Such is the skepticism of Hume; the mortality and materiality of the soul; the doctrine that man is a mere animal, that animal gratification is the chief end of our being, that right and wrong depend solely on the decision of the magistrate; that ridicule is the test of truth; that we may lawfully get all things, if we can get them safely; that modesty is inspired only by prejudice and has its foundation in the mere desire of appearing to be superior to animals. Adultery is lawful according to the religion of nature. . . . When we view the pernicious tendency of these doctrines, we may safely say that thoroughly practiced, they would overwhelm the world with that misery which the Scriptures exhibit as experienced only in hell.”

“Lord Bolingbroke declared that man is only a superior animal; that man’s chief end is to gratify the appetites and inclinations of the flesh. Adultery is no violation of the Law, or religion of nature; that there is no wrong in lewdness except in the highest incest; that the law or religion of nature forbids no incest except between the nearest relations and plainly supposes that all men and women are unchaste and that there is no such thing as conjugal fidelity.” These doctrines serve as specimens of the philosophy which then existed.

Dwight brought the old pagan philosophies before them. He said: “Both Zeno and Cleanthes taught that children may lawfully roast and eat their own parents as any other food; Diogenes and the cynics generally taught that parents may lawfully sacrifice and eat their children. Plato taught that lewdness was justifiable, and Cicero, that it was a crime of small magnitude. Aristippus taught that both theft and adultery were lawful.”

Dwight went on to show that the man who seriously believes in the rectitude of lying, cruelty, fraud, lewdness and impurity can not be virtuous. He showed this to be the case in the lives of Tindal, Blount and others. The ancient philosophers were adulterous and lewd. He cited the cases of Seneca, Aristippus, Zeno and Zenophon to show that many of the ancient philosophers were noted for sodomy. “These are among the most respectful of those men,” said he, “whose theological and moral systems modern philosophers prefer to that of Christ and his apostles.”

He warned the graduates to beware of the infidel arguments against the Scriptures, and the confidence with which they asserted their philosophies, and the boast that their opinions were embraced by the great body of mankind, especially of the ingenious and the learned. "Christians believe, and infidels do not, that the Scriptures are a divine revelation. Neither they nor we know, both classes merely believe. The only question to be decided between the contending parties is which believes on the best evidence. . . . The faith therefore which is best supported is most rational and ought to confer the superiority of character. . . ."

"I cheerfully admit, young gentlemen, that many infidels have been ingenious men; that some of them have been learned men, and that a few of them have been great men. Hume, Tindal and a few others have been distinguished for superior strength of mind, Bolingbroke for eloquence of the pen, Voltaire for brilliancy of imagination, and various others for respectable talents of different kinds. But I am wholly unable to form a list of infidels, which can, without extreme disadvantage, be compared with the two Bacons, Erasmus, Cumberland, Stiblingfleet, Grotius, Locke, Butler, Newton, Boyle, Berkley, Milton, Johnson, etc. In no walk of genius, in no path of knowledge, can infidels support a claim to superiority or equality with Christians. . . ."

"But what, let me ask, would have been our situation had these and many other able men of past ages never lived? How much of all we know

is contained in their works and derived solely from their talents and labors. Can it be just, can it be decent to forget the hand that feeds us, and treat with contempt those without whose assistance we should have been savages and blockheads? . . .”

“Because the vast majority believe false philosophy is no argument. So in days when all believed Aristotle’s philosophy, was it true?; or disbelieved the Copernican system and Galileo, was it false? . . .”

“Heathenism formerly overspread the world and numbered in its votaries nearly all the learned and unlearned of the human race. . . . When Christianity first began to progress, it could boast of only twelve poor uneducated men as its champions with perhaps less than a thousand followers. By the labors of this little band, in less than three centuries, it overturned most of the superstition, power, learning and philosophy of the known world.”

Dwight warned them against another source of danger; namely, the contempt and ridicule with which Christianity is opposed. Lord Shaftesbury was a master in ridicule. Voltaire said: “Render those pedants as enormously ridiculous as you can. Ridicule will do everything.” To this Dwight replied: “The cause which needs these weapons can not be just; the doctrine which can not be supported without them must be false.”

He warned them against the bias of the world toward infidelity. This is seen in history since the Reformation Revival, especially in Europe. He warned them of the certain bias in their own hearts

against Christianity. Said he: "The restraints of Christianity you, like others, at times feel with impatience and pain. Unbelief and infidelity seem to give freedom."

"Circumstances had filled every Christian, every friend of the human race with alarm, not for the permanence of Christianity, but for the continuance of peace, the safety of every right and the existence of every valuable interest."

"This infidel philosophy presents no efficacious means of restraining vice or promoting virtue; on the contrary, it encourages vice, and discourages virtue. . . . Philosophy will not and Christianity will increase your comfort and lessen your distress here, and save you from misery and confer on you happiness hereafter."

The summary of this sermon is remarkable: "As mere infidelity it teaches nothing but to contest all principles and to add none. As skepticism it is an ocean of doubt and agitation, in which there are no soundings, and to which there is no shore. As animalism and atheism it completes the ravage and ruin of man, which in its preceding forms, it had so successfully begun. It now holds out the rank Circorean draught, and sends the deluded wretches, who are allured, to taste to bustle and wallow with the swine, to play tricks with the monkey, to rage and rend with the tiger and to purify into nothing with the herd of kindred brutes.

"Christianity, with an influence infinitely more benevolent, enhances the value of your present life beyond the search of calculation. It informs you

that you are intelligent and moral creatures of the all-perfect Jehovah, who made, who preserved, who rules the universe, who is present in all places, who beholds all things, who is eternal and immutable, infinitely benevolent, infinitely beneficent, the faithful friend of the virtuous, the unchanging enemy of sin, the rewarder and the reward of all returning sinners, who diligently seek him. In this character, it presents to you a direct, clear and perfect system of rules for all your moral conduct; rules of thinking, speaking and acting; rules reaching every possible case and removing every rational doubt. Here is no uncertainty, no wavering, no rolling on the billows of anxiety, no plunging into the gulf of despair. Your path is a straight and beaten way and were you wayfaring, and fools, you need not err therein.

“As you pass through the various stages of your journey, you are furnished with aids and motives infinite to check your delay, to recall your wanderings, to cheer fatigue, to refresh your languid, to lessen your difficulties, to renew your strength, and to prolong your perseverance to the end. Should you at any time through ignorance, inattention or allurements, dangerously diverge from your course, a sweet and charming Voice behind you cries, ‘This is the way, walk ye therein.’ Should you hereafter have families, your communication of the principles and your practice of the duties of Christianity will beyond all things else insure to you domestic peace and prosperity. . . . The friends who visit you will esteem and love you, for

they will find in your character something to be esteemed and loved. . . . To the neighborhood around you, you will be esteemed benefactions and blessings. The poor, the sick, the outcast, the friendless and the disconsolate, will especially acknowledge you as their patrons. Enemies you will find . . . Compare your friends with your enemies and you will find nothing to be regretted.

“Nor will you be less useful to your country. Rational freedom can not be preserved without the aid of Christianity . . . In this country, the freest and the happiest, which the world has hitherto seen, the whole system of policy originated, has continued and stands on the single basis of Christianity. Good subjects have been formed here by forming good men; and none but good subjects can long be governed by persuasion. The learning, peace, mild intercourse and universally happy state of society, enjoyed here, all have the same origin. Would you preserve these blessings during your own life, would you hand them down to posterity, increasing multitudes of those who are not Christian, and all those who with one voice tell you, EMBRACE CHRISTIANITY” (Dwight, *Baccalaureate Sermon* [1796]).

“It is safe to say,” writes Dean Henry B. Wright, “that the battle with infidelity and immorality at Yale had been won as early as 1796, and from that year until 1802 the majority of the students were earnest, persistent seekers after the truth” (Wright, *Two Centuries of Christian Activities at Yale*, p. 55).

The Yale Moral Society

The year 1797, twenty-four Yale students founded the Moral Society of Yale College. It originated with the student body and, not until 1815, was any instructor connected with it. It was a secret society and the following vow was taken by its members: "You, and each of you, promise in the presence of these witnesses, that you will never, either directly or indirectly, reveal any part of what you are now to be informed."

The purpose of the society was thus stated: "Sincere morality was essential to happiness in this life and in that which is to come, and since it is equally necessary to the usefulness and respectability of all human institutions, the formation of a society in this Seminary must be considered an object of high importance. Influenced by these considerations, the undersigned do hereby form themselves into a society for the promotion and preservation of morality among the students of this university to be known by the name of the Moral Society of Yale College."

This society discouraged profanity, immorality, intemperance, etc. By 1800, the Moral Society included "between one-third and one-half of all the students in its membership." They warned any offending students unless they desisted "their conduct would be made known to the authorities of the College." The secretary wrote: "Never were its own morals more true or those of students more strictly watched than at present." The minutes

of this society give evidence that Dwight's fight for truth and morality had won the day at Yale.

Revivals at Yale

The influence of the Moral Society and the inspiration of Dwight's sermons laid deep moral foundations for the great revivals which visited Yale College in the opening decades of the nineteenth century.

The Great Revival in the Eastern churches, and especially in the Western country, began to be felt at Yale in 1802, when students entered the college from revival communities. In the spring of 1802 a little group of young men agreed to meet daily in earnest prayer that the college might be included in the general awakening. In a short time, as a result of their prayers, some students presented themselves for membership in the college church. The number increased with each communion. When Jeremiah Warts, of the Senior class, came forward, the interest became general throughout the whole college. There were no special religious services in the chapel, nor were the regular college exercises interrupted. Students met together for confession and prayer. Dwight and other members of the faculty held numerous interviews with inquiring students. This revival lasted until the end of the summer term. Sixty-three students joined the college church, and many others united with their home churches. It was pre-eminently an awakening of the students from a moral to a religious life. "Twenty-five members

of the Senior Class, no one of whom had ever been 'expelled, rusticated or publically admonished,' united with the College Church the Sabbath before graduation. . . ." It is estimated that out of about one hundred and sixty students then in the college, eighty were converted during the year.

A college church had existed for the benefit of Yale students since 1756. It was a "separate church within college walls." Thus Yale had her own pastor, church and congregation. This church became the center of revival interests. Three years after the revival of 1802, Dwight assumed the college pastorate as an added duty to his presidency.

The next revival in Yale was in 1808. The interest was keen from April to the end of the school term. Dwight held a weekly meeting for inquirers. Of the thirty converts, twenty-three united with the college church. There was another revival in 1812-1813. It seemed to have originated among the students themselves. "The death of Tom Paine, the infidel, as a common drunkard and the strong sentiment awakened thereby, against infidelity and immorality, may have had its effect upon the student body. Certain it is that during the year 1813 the Moral Society was at the height of its power and that its members were the moving spirits in the spiritual awakening."

Early that year several Seniors were praying, although unknown to each other, for a spiritual revival. A number later agreed to pray for the conversion of a student, Elias Cornelius, one whom they expected to oppose any awakening. He soon

broke with evil company, was converted, and led in turn twenty members of his own class to Christ. "By his labors between eighty and a hundred students of all classes were awakened to a new sense of their Christian responsibility." A writer at this time called Yale "The Eden of America."

The last revival during Dwight's presidency occurred in 1815. For some time secret prayer meetings had been held early Sunday mornings. At a "Sabbath evening prayers" a student read the story of the death of Sir Francis Newport. He was greatly affected and read its closing scenes with eyes bathed in tears. "Such an exhibition of feeling where it was least expected, operated at once with a kind of electric power on the whole body of students. Nearly every individual in the college became anxious for the salvation of his soul; and those who had been most thoughtless seemed to be most affected." It was more emotional and less satisfactory than other revivals. However, eighty men professed conversion.

Timothy Dwight died in 1817. Paine's life stands in great contrast to this revival leader. Dwight left a fragrant memory and a trail of transformed lives behind him. The converts of the revivals and the groups of praying students stand in vivid contrast with infidel groups. The Christian students from Yale laid foundations for good in East and West, while the lives of the infidels, as we have seen, ended in disgust and despair. Yale, in this revival period, influenced the life of the republic as it never has before or since.

Revivals in Other Colleges

Special mention should be made of Samuel John Mills, who entered Williams College in the spring of 1806. He was converted at Torrington, Litchfield County, Conn., during a revival in 1798-99. As a child of revival he was prepared to kindle revival fires in his college. Previous to his coming to Williams there had been a revival there in 1802-03.

During his first year at Williams eight or ten were converted. The work continued through the summer. Thirteen were added to the church, of whom nine entered the Christian ministry. In 1808, a group formed a secret society to extend their influences to other colleges. They aroused the missionary energies of Pliny Fisk, who afterwards went to Palestine. That year they held the famous "Haystack Prayer Meeting." In some respects this was the birthplace of the organized foreign missionary movement in America. These men carried the revival spirit with them when they went to Andover in 1809. Here they inspired the missionary spirit of others like Judson, Rice and Hall, the first missionaries to go to India. This also led to the formation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. Another revival visited Williams College in 1812, under the preaching of Nott. Both town and college felt its power. There were eight such revivals in Williams College in twenty-six years.

Chapter VI.

THE GREAT REVIVAL IN THE WEST

THE Great Revival had its most spectacular manifestations in the Western territories. Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. Most of the great general revivals have had certain physical accidentals associated with them in some field of their operations. This froth on the top of the wave should not blind us from seeing the deep significance and power of the movement beneath the physical and accidental. The Great Revival transformed Kentucky and the West. One writer has said:

“The revival of 1800 was one of the most wonderful events of modern times. It appeared more like the sudden conversion of a nation than the regeneration and reformation of individuals. If a traveler had passed through the whole settled portions of the Northwest in 1799, he would have heard the songs of the drunkard, the loud swearing and obscenity of crowds around taverns, and the bold blasphemous vaunting of infidels in every village and hamlet. If he had returned in 1801, he would have heard instead, the proclamation of the gospel to awed multitudes, prayers in the groves and forests, and songs of praise to God along all the public thoroughfares. It was evidenced in all the country, but most of all where people were

coarsest and most blatant in the coarsest type of infidelity.”

The historian of such a revival recognizes the important evangelistic ministry of the pioneer preachers who preceded this great awakening, and who in a large measure prepared the highway along which Christ marched as the conqueror of souls. The three outstanding denominations in the Western territories were the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian.

The Baptists: Henry Fowler, in *The American Pulpit*, writes: “Turning now to the frontier country south of the Ohio, we find the earliest Christian pioneers coming into Kentucky on the first wave of population, were of the Baptist denomination, a large and influential body in Virginia and North Carolina, whence the great part of emigration to Kentucky originated; and whilst there were but few regular preachers who came with the sole purpose of preaching, there were many who came to get farms and establish estates, and who were also licensed to preach and administer the sacraments. They were not long after followed by Presbyterian missionaries, devoted exclusively to preaching the gospel and supported at the East.

“In 1786, Baptists and Presbyterians had an equal number of churches in Kentucky, sixteen each. For years these were the only two prominent sects in that country. The Presbyterians would allow none to preach who had not a classical education. Baptists permitted all whom they considered were ‘called of God,’ though they understood not the

simplest rules of English grammar. Baptists had not one classically educated minister in their ranks. The Baptists went to the extreme in the West in their opposition to education, holding it impaired rather than augmented the ability of a would-be pastor. Fierce persecution in Virginia and other States had engendered a hatred of the established clergy and everything savoring of episcopacy.

The Baptists had their "Covenant Meetings." These were usually held on the Saturday preceding the monthly communion services. In these Covenant Meetings the Baptists sought to stimulate the spiritual life of their members.

The Methodists: The Methodist was a younger denomination. Its first regular preachers landed in America in 1770. Within fourteen years after the first Methodist preacher had touched foot on this continent, the Methodists were penetrating the wilds of the far West. James Haw was the first preacher to cross the Alleghenies. Others rapidly followed.

The first Kentucky circuit was formed in 1786, and comprised the whole State. They had only two preachers, Benjamin Ogden and James Haw. At the end of that year they reported ninety members. Bishop Asbury visited this territory in 1790, and organized a conference with six preachers and 1,555 members. In 1800 there were five circuits and 1,742 members.

"The Methodist Society from the start laid great stress upon personal religion. . . . They were a poor people it is true, and despised by society at

large, yet they were men and women filled with a sense of correcting in some measure profession and life. To the Methodist, religion was something to be actually experienced and felt; and the emotions played a large part in his worship. The class meeting, organized early in the movement, has been of great importance in the history of the church. . . . Regular meetings were held, under one of their number who had been appointed leader. . . . Class meetings were promptly organized by members of the society who emigrated to the West, the most efficient of their numbers acting as leader'' (Cleveland, *The Revival in the West*, p. 48).

The Methodist class meeting was composed usually of a group of about a dozen people. The leaders made regular reports to the preachers concerning the spiritual condition of those in their classes and of the funds collected. The class leaders looked after the absentees. They must have a good reason for nonattendance. If not, they might be dropped from the class. Thus the Methodists maintained a careful supervision of their members. Their itinerant system was adapted to work with a scattered membership in a sparsely settled country.

The Circuit Riders

The Methodist itinerant was always an evangelist. His ministry was an effective evangelistic method for teaching the scattered multitudes. Cleveland informs us: "The ministers of the Methodist Church assume the position, responsibility, and duties of the calling under the impulse and

belief that they, each and every one, are specially called, designated, and sent forth by the Holy Spirit of truth and power to be ambassadors of Jesus Christ. The conference might decide, by consideration of gifts and graces, according to their best belief and conviction, whether it was a real or spurious call, and if their opinion coincided with the conviction of the individual, he was set apart for the sacred office of the ministry. At the time to which we refer, the office was no sinecure. His field of labor was the world; his particular station was determined by the church, in conference represented; his annual salary, sixty-four dollars, according to the Book of Discipline. And this was to include the presents which he might receive. If any grateful sister should knit for him a pair of woolen socks, an expression of the warmth of her regard, it must be reported to the conference, a price set upon it, and the sum deducted from the sixty-four dollars. And so, whatever was received, from whatever source, was to be deducted from the prescribed salary; and if, as sometimes happened, the yearly presents from marriage fees, or otherwise, amounted to more than sixty-four dollars, the surplus was handed over to the church, to be paid to some less fortunate brother. They must also provide themselves with a horse, riding saddle, wearing apparel, and necessary books, with no outfit allowance from the church; and west of the mountains many were the preachers who never realized, either in legal coin or in presents, even the stipulated sixty-four dollars. Nothing more was

allowed a man with a wife than without one, for it was understood in the primitive Methodist Church that a preacher had no business with a wife, and was much better without than with one. John Wesley had such an unfortunate experience in wife-dom, that he discouraged marrying; Francis Asbury, the master genius of Methodism in this country, was so devoted to his work that he discountenanced matrimony as a hindrance. He once said that he never married, because he never could find a woman who had grace enough in her heart to be willing to be separated from her husband, the year round, with the exception of one week, and if he could find one so good, he would not marry her, for he had not grace enough to be happy away from her. Nevertheless, he insisted that it was the business of every man to support one woman. He therefore gave the larger part of his income to the maintenance of a distant cousin in England, and after her death to some other female. But he never approached nearer than this to the countenancing of matrimony. When one of the young brethren was so rash or unfortunate as to become entangled in the bonds of wedlock, there was a tacit understanding that he had better 'locate,' in the language of the church, that is to retire from itinerant labor, settle down to some self-supporting occupation, preach in one place, and no more draw on the funds of the conference" (Cleveland, *The Revival in the West*, p. 48).

William McKendree and William Burke are Methodism's outstanding revival warriors. Burke

was a famous itinerant and was in charge of circuits in this Western territory from 1792 until the revival. He labored in Tennessee and in North Carolina. In 1798 he was itinerating in the Cumberland country. At the annual conference at Baltimore in 1800, Bishop Asbury gave him charge of the Hinkstone Circuit of churches. McKendree was an ex-soldier. He became a Methodist about 1787. The revival was under way when he was appointed to the Kentucky Conference in 1800. He did much to promote the revival, and later to consolidate its results.

In 1799, the two brothers, William and John McGee, came through the Cumberland country of Kentucky and Tennessee, preaching with tremendous power to great multitudes. One was a Presbyterian and the other was a Methodist, but they were one in their search for souls.

The Presbyterians: The Presbyterians represented a high type of people. Craighead, in his *Scotch and Irish Seeds*, describes their character and their distinctive type of religious life and worship: "So large an immigration and of such character as flowed into the middle and southern States for nearly half a century, could not fail to exert a powerful and lasting influence upon the Presbyterianism of this country. For the most part, these colonists had been tillers of the soil in their native lands and on their arrival on our shores, went immediately to work to make homes for their families upon the fertile lands which only needed the wise and persistent labors of these sons of toil to

cause them to yield abundant harvests. They did not come as criminals, fleeing from justice, or paupers to fasten themselves for support upon the industries of the country, but with money enough—the result of their previous energy and thrift—to purchase the choicest of the lands. As a consequence, prosperity attended their well-directed endeavors; plenty ere long smiled around their happy households; churches and schools at once took their proper places and flourished in all their settlements; and society received an impress which it retains to the present day.”

“The mode of worship in use in Scotland and Ireland was also introduced wherever churches were formed, great care being taken in defining the limits of each congregation or parish. The Bible and the catechism held an honored place in the instruction of youth in their families. On the Sabbath all the members of the household were regularly assembled, and parents, children and servants recited the catechism. This was followed by explanation of the doctrines and precepts contained therein, and finally the duty of obedience was enforced by showing that its doctrines were derived from the Scriptures and conformed strictly to their teachings.

“A portion of the congregation was assigned to each elder, whose duty it was to look after the spiritual interest of the people in that particular field. The pastor, accompanied by one or more of his elders, was accustomed to meet his people frequently, either at a private house or in some more

convenient place in different parts of his congregation, to hear them recite the catechism and to address to them words of Christian counsel and admonition. In this way and largely through the fidelity of the eldership, impressions made by preaching on the Sabbath were rendered permanent and fruitful. As a consequence, also, of this method of instruction, the members of the several churches were intelligent Christians, well grounded in the Scriptures, not tossed about by every wind of doctrine, and able to give a reason for the hope that was in them.

“Families generally united in forming settlements, fixing their residence sufficiently near each other to furnish mutual help and protection from the savage foes who lurked in the neighboring forests, to gratify their social feelings, and to enjoy the privileges of religious worship. Wherever they formed a settlement, among the first things they did, after providing shelter for their families, was to organize congregations for Christian worship and erect a tabernacle to the Lord”

“Twice a year the Lord’s Supper was celebrated. Previous to it a day of fastings was observed, and appropriate sermons were preached on the three days preceding the Sabbath, by the pastor or neighboring minister. Members of adjacent congregations generally attended in large numbers. On these occasions the preaching was often in the open air, as the congregations were too large to be accommodated in the church. These seasons were anticipated with much interest and were fre-

quently accompanied with wonderful manifestations of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The emblems were spread upon long tables, which extended oftentimes through all the aisles of the church from the pulpit to the doors. At these tables the communicants were seated, none being admitted to this privilege unless they had previously received tokens from the pastor or the sessions. (The tokens were small pieces of lead or pewter, and usually had the initial letter of the church stamped upon them.) They were carried by communicants to neighboring churches when they desired to commune. To them the Lord's Supper was in its fullest sense a monument to the great facts of redemption, a memorial of the necessity of the atonement, the Glorious Deity of the Son of God, the freeness of justification and the fulness of the promises" (Craighead, *Scotch and Irish Seeds*, pp. 283, 284).

The Great Revival was born in Kentucky among the Presbyterians in their precommunion preparatory services. Their preachers included the outstanding revivalists of that Western country.

John McGee, a Methodist, and William McGee, a Presbyterian, were outstanding ministers in the revival. Both had careful Presbyterian training in Guilford County, North Carolina. John became a Methodist while in Maryland. He returned to his home and became a local preacher. In 1798 he moved west to Sumner County, Tennessee, where his brother had settled. It is related of William McGee that "he would sometimes exhort after the sermon, standing on the floor, or sitting, or lying

in the dust, his eyes streaming, and his heart so full, that he could only ejaculate, 'Jesus, Jesus'."

Other Presbyterian revival workers included William Hodge, Barton W. Stone, Robert Marshall and John Rankin. Hodge settled in Sumner County the year prior to William McGee's settlement there. Stone settled in Bourbon, Ky. Robert Marshall came to eastern Kentucky in 1793, and was in charge of the Bethel and Blue Spring Churches.

James McGready was born in Pennsylvania about 1760. His parents moved to Guilford County, North Carolina, where he spent his boyhood days. As a lad he was exemplary in conduct. He was so sedate that his uncle put him under the training of John McMillan, a Presbyterian minister in western Pennsylvania. J. M. Howard writes in *Hay's Presbyterians*, "About 1786, he, by accident, overheard a conversation between two friends, of which he was the subject. They freely expressed their views about his religious character, declaring that although a minister in the Presbyterian Church, he was a mere formalist and a stranger to regenerating grace. This led him to earnest self-examination and prayer, and at a sacramental meeting, near the Monongahela River, he found the new spiritual life which his friends had declared he lacked. This new experience transformed his whole life. Thenceforth he made it his mission to arouse false professors, to awaken a dead church and warn sinners and lead them to seek the new spiritual life which he himself had found. In North Carolina, where he went as pastor, extensive revivals were kindled.

His ministry also aroused fierce opposition. He was licensed by the Redstone Presbytery. Wherever he preached revivals broke out. He was accused of 'running people distracted.' His life was threatened, in a letter written in blood. His pulpit was burned down. Because of this opposition he went west in 1796, and accepted a call from some of his former hearers who had settled in Kentucky. He became pastor of three churches in Logan County: Gasper River, Muddy River and Red River. Here his sermons stirred the ungodly and aroused opposition. The people had been told by his enemies not to give any trouble to experimental religion."

Barton W. Stone describes McGready: "His person was not prepossessing, nor his appearance interesting, except his remarkable gravity and small piercing eyes. His coarse tremulous voice excited in me the idea of something unearthly. His gestures were *sui generis*, the perfect reverse of elegance. Everything appeared by him forgotten but the salvation of souls. Such earnestness, such zeal, such powerful persuasion, I had never before witnessed."

Revival in Logan County

A revival rewarded McGready's efforts in Logan County and signs of The Great Revival commenced to appear. They were aligned with the nation-wide prayer movement. McGready drew up the following solemn covenant, which bound all its signers to offer special prayer at definite times:

“When we consider the word and promise of a compassionate God, to the poor lost family of Adam, we find the strongest encouragement for Christians to pray in faith—to ask in the name of Jesus for the conversion of their fellow-men. None ever went to Christ, when on earth, with the case of their friends that were denied, and although the days of his humiliation are ended, yet for encouragement of his people, he had left it on record, that where two or three agree upon earth to ask in prayer believing, it shall be done. Again ‘whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.’ With these promises before us we feel encouraged to unite our supplications to a prayer-hearing God, for the outpouring of his Spirit, that his people may be quickened and comforted, and that our children and sinners generally may be converted. Therefore we bind ourselves to observe the third Saturday of each month, for one year, as a day of fasting and prayer, for the conversion of sinners in Logan County and throughout the world. We also engage to spend one-half hour every Saturday evening, beginning at the setting of the sun, and one-half hour every Sabbath morning, at the rising of the sun, in pleading with God to revive his work.”

The supernatural is clearly seen in the revival which followed this call to prayer. The human factor also played an important part. The secret was in the combination of the supernatural and the human elements. Prayer related the church aright to God as a channel through which His process could

be manifested. The sacramental occasions, with their three-day preparatory meetings, promoted the revival for which they prayed.

In July of that year the Lord's Supper was celebrated at Red River. "The solemnity was very great. During the time of preaching many of the most bold and daring sinners of the country were brought to cover their faces and weep bitterly."

On the fifth Sunday in August, McGready assisted John Rankin at Gasper River, he having relinquished that church to him. "Many persons were so struck with deep, heart-piercing convictions that their bodily strength was quite overcome so that they fell to the ground and could not refrain from bitter groans and outcries for mercy."

The meeting at Muddy River in September surpassed all previous gatherings. In October, McGready, McGee and Rankin held a sacramental meeting at the Ridge, a pastorless congregation in western Tennessee. "The winter of 1799 was for the most part a time of weeping and mourning with the children of God."

During the summer of 1800 the revival had reached a place concerning which McGready wrote: "All previous to it was but a few scattering drops before a mighty rain." A meeting was held at Red River in June. McGready, Rankin and Hodge were there and preached. Meetings were also held at Gasper River and Muddy River.

In August a meeting was held at Edward's Chapel on the Cumberland side of the Ridge, and later a sacramental meeting at the Ridge, ten miles

distant. The latter continued for four days; more than a hundred souls were converted. Two weeks later another meeting was held at Blidsoe's Creek in western Tennessee, where about seventy were converted. Shortly after this another great soul-winning meeting was held at Desha's Creek.

This revival spread in every direction, through Kentucky, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, western Pennsylvania, western Virginia and the country north of the Ohio River. This was because people who came from a distance to witness these revivals carried home glowing reports of the meetings. They started Prayer Societies, and soon revivals came to their own communities.

T Barton W. Stone, Presbyterian pastor at Concord and Cane Ridge, journeyed across the State to witness the revival on McGready's field. He writes: "There on the edge of a prairie in Logan County, Kentucky, the multitudes came together and continued a number of days and nights encamped on the ground, during which time worship was carried on in some part of the encampment. The scene was new to me and passing strange. It baffled description. Many, very many, fell down as men slain in battle and continued for hours together in an apparently breathless and motionless state, sometimes for a few minutes reviving and exhibiting symptoms of life by a deep groan or a piercing shriek, or by a prayer for mercy, fervently uttered. After lying there for hours, they obtained deliverance. The gloomy cloud that had covered their faces seemed gradually and visibly to disap-

pear, and hope in smiles brightened into joy. They would rise shouting deliverance, and then would address the surrounding multitudes in language truly eloquent and impressive. With astonishment did I hear men, women and children declaring the wonderful works of God and the glorious mysteries of the Gospel." (Quoted by Candler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*, pp. 178, 179).

Pastor Stone returned to his people and reported what he had witnessed. "The congregation was affected with awful solemnity and many returned home weeping." Shortly afterwards, in August, 1801, his people at Cane Ridge witnessed similar scenes. Bishop Candler quotes an eyewitness: "The roads were crowded with wagons, carriages, horses and footmen moving to the solemn camp. . . . It was judged by military men on the ground that between twenty and thirty thousand persons were assembled. Four or five preachers spoke at the same time, in different parts of the encampment without confusion. The Methodist and Baptist preachers aided in the work and all appeared cordially united in it. They were of one mind and soul; the salvation of sinners was the one object. They all engaged in singing the same songs, all united in prayer, all preached the same things. . . . The numbers converted will be known only in eternity. Many things transpired in the meetings which were so much like miracles that they had the same effect as miracles on unbelievers. By them many were convinced that Jesus was the Christ and were persuaded to submit to him. This meet-

ing continued six or seven days and nights, and would have continued longer, but food for the sustenance of such a multitude failed. To this meeting many had come from Ohio and other distant parts. These returned home and infused the same spirit in their respective neighborhoods. Similar results followed. So low had religion sunk and such carelessness had universally prevailed that I had thought nothing common could have arrested and held the attention of the people" (Candler, *Ibid.*).

The revival became a veritable contagion. By January, 1801, the excitement had reached Nashville and Knoxville. The revival spread north of the Ohio River. By 1802 it had reached the Western Reserve with the same characteristics as in Kentucky.

People, as we have seen, came to these encampments from great distances. They came on foot, on horseback and in wagons. Therefore, it was necessary to bring provisions for man and beast. These gatherings were called "Camp Meetings."

By 1803 revivals had become general all over the United States. Asbury wrote in his journal: "I have a variety of letters conveying the pleasing intelligence of the work of God in every state, district and most of the circuits in the Union."

The Baptists: The Baptist churches in Kentucky were greatly blessed by the revival. In most of them, however, the physical excitements were not prominent. Davidson, in his *History of the Presbyterians in Kentucky*, represented only his

own church when he wrote: "Unlike the still small voice of the softly flowing waters of Siloa, The Great Revival of 1800 resembled the whirlwind, the earthquake, the tempestuous torrent whose track was marked by violence and desolation."

However, Spenser, in his *History of the Kentucky Baptists*, writes: "This description must be applied to the influence on the Pedo-baptist and not to that of the Baptists."

The excesses did not generally prevail among the Baptists. The Great Revival, instead of creating divisions among the Kentucky Baptists, healed the schism then prevailing. Collins, in his *History of Kentucky*, writes: "The Baptists escaped almost entirely these extraordinary and disgraceful scenes which extensively obtained among some other persuasions of those days."

The work among the Baptists, according to Hickman's narrative, was deeply spiritual and quiet, compared with the great excitement prevailing elsewhere. "Meetings were held once a month on Saturday and Sunday. Members were received on Saturday and baptized on the Sunday following." The Severns Valley Church records contain the following items: "In September, prayed at opening and received seven members by experience; in October, met praying. In November, had no business to do but to praise God and receive twenty members. In December, received nine members. In January, 1802, received twenty-two. In this manner the work proceeded until 146 were received."

In the South Elkhorn Church, meetings were conducted by John Shackelford, "last survivor of that noble band of Christian heroes who preached the Gospel through prison gates." In 1800 the church numbered 127. During the revival period 318 were baptized.

The history of the Great Crossing Church is typical of many Baptist churches of that day. It was organized in 1785, twelve years after Daniel Boone had come to Kentucky. Those pioneer Baptists lived in a dense forest, and, like the Plymouth Pilgrims, when they met for worship they were obliged to take with them their trusty rifles for a protection against lurking savages.

"From 1795 to 1800, the church was in a cold condition, there being only six members added through experience and baptism. Instances of discipline were frequent. They insisted strongly upon correctness of Christian walk. Members were dealt with for fighting, swearing, drunkenness, speaking evil of a brother, gambling, buying lottery tickets, or managing lotteries, having connection with racing, dancing, or anything of that character. There is a record of a brother having been excluded for allowing 'race-paths to be cleared near his tavern.' There is another case of this brother being advised to pay 'nineteen bushels of mercantable wheat to another brother on account of a contract and still later the church insisted strongly on its members not even attending dancing picnics and barbecues. . . . In the main, her face was set against the whole catalogue of evils which is doing much to demoral-

ize the Christian world'' (Hickman's *Narrative*, pp. 30, 31).

The Great Crossing Church, in 1800, added 175, and in 1801, 186 by baptism and experience. So extensive and scattered were the converts that three new churches grew out of the mother church. On Feb. 7, 1801, they dismissed twenty-seven members to form the Deep River Church; January, 1801, twenty to form the Mountain Island Church; September, 1801, fourteen to form the North Elkhorn Church, and March, 1803, nine to form the Long Lick Church.

When the Elkhorn Association, to which this church belonged, met in 1799, its twenty-nine churches reported twenty-nine conversions. Then the revival came. In 1801 this same association reported 3,011 received by baptism and experience, and nine new churches were added to their number. In 1802 they reported 488 additions, with twelve more churches added. In 1800 this association had twenty-seven churches and 1,642 members. It grew by 1802 to forty-eight churches and 5,310 members.

"During this Great Revival," writes Prof. J. N. Bradley, "many were added to the church who afterwards were influential members and occupied prominent positions, not only in the church, but also in our denomination at large in the community" (Elkhorn Association, Minutes of 1875).

The Great Revival, more than anything else, gave the Baptists that impetus which made possible their great growth and influence in the rapidly expanding West.

The Revival in Western Pennsylvania

Elisha Macurdy was the outstanding evangelistic pastor among the Presbyterians of western Pennsylvania. Early in his ministry he came in contact with Philip Jackson, a ruling elder in the church at Cross Roads. He was known as "the praying elder." They were men of the same spirit. Jackson's boy was wild and irreligious. When he made this known to Macurdy, they turned aside in the woods to pray for him. A little later this wayward youth was converted. This led to a great attachment between Macurdy and Philip Jackson. Macurdy became the pastor of Cross Roads and Three Springs Churches. Late in 1801 and early in 1802 there was a noticeable increase in attendance at his church services, and Christians became concerned for others. "The news of the revivals in the South and West kindled hope and prayer and expectation."

Macurdy and "the praying elder" often retired to the woods and prayed for a revival. They were not alone in this. A number of women in the Cross Roads Church formed a prayer group. Six women met for prayer in a private house. Hearing of this, he said: "Six praying women were on one side and the Prince of Darkness, with his legions, was on the opposing side."

"The Concert of Prayer" was very thinly attended at Three Springs. Macurdy proposed that fifteen minutes of every Thursday, at sun-setting, should be employed by all his members in "special

prayer to God, for the outpouring of his Spirit, and the revival of his work." This was favorably received and followed. The Cross Roads Church agreed to do the same. (Based on *Life of Elisha Macurdy*, by David E. Elliott.)

Revival at the Lord's Table

In September, on the Sunday preparatory to the administration of the Lord's Supper at Three Springs, there was an unusual attendance. Macurdy preached morning and afternoon. He challenged them, from the text, Josh. 24:15, "Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve." "He called upon them to give their decision for God. Unexpectedly the whole congregation arose under deepest concern. He dismissed the congregation and returned home. After he had retired about fifty people appointed a time for prayer and continued on the ground unwilling to go away. They spent most of the night in prayer and worship. The following Thursday was a fast preparatory to the communion. It was a service of unusual solemnity. This was followed by a prayer meeting that evening in the house of one of the elders. Macurdy, as he neared the house that evening, heard cries from a plot of woodland. With an elder he went to it and found two young women, who had retired there to pray, prostrated and in deep distress for their soul salvation. They brought them to the prayer meeting where they cried out in their great distress. It did not interfere with the services of the evening. So interested was the group in prayer

that, before they knew it, the morning light had dawned upon them. They had spent the whole night in prayer."

The next morning Mr. Macurdy went to the church to meet with the session and converse with applicants for the Lord's Supper. On the way they heard cries of distress from the woods and found a number in distress of soul. None that day were found ready. That night they held another prayer meeting. Again, to their surprise, so great was the interest that, before they knew it, the new day had dawned on them. Saturday night was also spent in prayer.

On the Lord's Day the Lord's Supper was administered with great solemnity. "In the afternoon a considerable number of persons were seized with strong bodily affections, so that, at the close of the services, they were unable without assistance, to retire from the ground. This was the first appearance in this part of the church of those peculiar bodily affections by which the work was afterwards so much distinguished. Before separating, appointments were made for two prayer meetings in the evening. Again the whole night was spent in devotional exercises."

Next day Macurdy was assisted by Mr. Marquis, who, hearing of the work, hastened to his assistance. He preached from Hos. 10:12. The effect was wonderful. Fifty or more "felt helpless to leave when the congregation was dismissed."

Marquis and Macurdy on the following Thursday went to Pittsburgh to attend the meeting of

the synod. So great was the interest in their reports that about a dozen of the synod members came back with Mr. Macurdy, to witness for themselves "those gracious operations of God's mighty power." The next day (Sunday) two sermons were preached in a tent at Cross Roads. Services were solemn, but nothing unusual happened. There was preaching in the evening, and following this they remained together all night in "prayer and exhortation."

"It was a solemn night: many were affected; numbers sank down; the cries and groans of the distressed were almost incessant; numbers were not able to sit up or speak most of the night; some who were able to speak, expressed their apprehension of great danger, from the sense of their guilt and aggravated sin." Before separating a communion service was appointed for Cross Roads on the last Sunday in October.

The observance of the Lord's Supper, the last Sunday in October at Cross Roads, was a memorable occasion for this church. This is described in the following extract from *The Western Missionary Magazine*: "A great multitude of people collected, many from a great distance, accommodated with provisions to continue on the ground during the whole of the solemnity. There were thirty-two wagons. On Sabbath day and night there was much rain and snow, yet the people continued at the place, night and day, until Tuesday morning. Nine ministers attended. There were no extraordinary exercises on Saturday, until the public worship was

concluded; one fell down suddenly just when the blessing was pronounced, and from that time until Tuesday morning continually, some were affected, and generally a great number. The meeting house, though large, being insufficient to contain half of the people, the sacrament was administered at the tent to about eight hundred communicants, of whom forty-one were then admitted for the first time from the Cross Roads and Three Springs congregations. Though there was a continual fall of rain, this large assembly attended with undisturbed composure." Ministers still preached successively in the house throughout the day. Prayer and exhortations were continued all night in the meeting house.

"The brethren made an appointment for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, "the second Sabbath in November" at the Upper Buffalo Church. "On the day preceding the communion an immense concourse of people assembled. It was much the largest assembly which had ever been seen collected for divine worship in western Pennsylvania. The number was estimated at ten thousand. Fifteen ministers, all members of the Synod of Pittsburgh, were present and labored together during this solemn season with the utmost harmony. Mr. Macurdy was one of the number. He preached Saturday afternoon, simultaneously with one of the other brethren, who addressed another part of the vast assembly; one occupying the meeting house and the other the tent. The evening and night were spent in preaching, exhortation and prayer" (*The Western Missionary Magazine*, Vol. I., pp. 334, 335).

On Sunday morning two discourses were delivered, preparatory to the communion service. One was in the meeting house and the other in the tent, in front of which the communion table was spread. After the usual preliminary exercises were over, the Lord's Supper was administered to nearly one thousand communicants.

These services continued until Tuesday evening, "Some hundreds were, during the season, convinced of their sin and misery; many of them sunk down and cried bitterly and incessantly for several hours. Some fell suddenly; some lost their strength gradually; some lay quiet and silent; some were violently agitated; and many sat silently weeping, who were not exercised with any bodily affections" (*Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 326, 338).

Thus did this wonderful work continue to prevail and extend. Meetings were held in the various churches throughout the region. They were crowded with people from all parts of the country, from the Forks, Salem, Congruity, Chartiers and other places, to the distance of nearly a hundred miles. Within the bounds of Mr. Macurdy's charge the revival prevailed with great and increasing power over all classes of persons. The old, the young and the middle-aged were, respectively, the subjects of its gracious influence.

Moses Waddell, president of Franklin College, Athens, Ga., tells of the spread of the revival: "The Great Revival which commenced in Kentucky gradually passed on through Tennessee into North Carolina and Georgia."

The Revival in Canada

Canada has never witnessed religious awakenings as far reaching as those under Wesley, Whitefield or Edwards. However, the Canadian churches experienced gracious revivals. Noteworthy among these were those associated with The Great Revival of 1800. W. A. McKay writes: "The Great Awakening of 1800 in the United States extended into Canada, up along the shore of Lake Ontario, even to the head of the lake to Niagara, and thence to Long Point on the northwestern shore of Lake Erie. This gracious work is closely associated with the name of Rev. Joseph Jewell, a Methodist minister, who traveled throughout this newly settled district, preaching in log houses, in barns and sometimes in groves, and everywhere beholding the power and grace of God."

In 1805 there was convened at Elizabethtown what has since been usually known among Methodists as "the Revival Conference." "No other conference in Canada," says Playter, the historian, "is like it, nor any other session of an annual conference in Great Britain or in the United States. The awakening and converting power of God has appeared frequently at these sessions, but at none of which there is any record where the divine power was so greatly manifested and with such results. It has been reckoned that during the five days the conference was in session . . . more than one hundred persons were awakened and the total increase of membership from this blessed revival at the

Elizabethtown Conference was about fourteen hundred.”

“In this great revival the labors of the preachers, local and traveling, were very great, and some wrought for God beyond their strength. A great impression was made on the public mind in the wonderful change of character and life in so many persons and in so short a time. The young had forsaken their frivolities, and were now serious, fond of the Bible and seeking knowledge to make them useful. Those indifferent to religion, lovers of pleasure and not lovers of God, were most zealous for the truth and lovers of the Sabbath. The quarrelsome had learned in meekness and love to bear with evil ones and forgive. Many drunkards had substituted a resort to the house of God for the tavern, the Psalms and hymns for the songs of Bacchus, and cleanliness and sobriety for rags and strong drink. Rude companies and neighborhoods loved the devout assemblies of the saints, spent their Sabbaths in the House of God, and became orderly, civil and hospitable.”

Chapter VII.

PHYSICAL ACCIDENTALS IN WESTERN REVIVALS

IN The Great Revival, especially in the West, there were associated with it certain physical manifestations, "bodily exercises," "exercises," "jerkings," etc. Some writers discredit the whole awakening because of those accidentals. These physical manifestations occurred in isolated cases in other revivals. Bishop Candler writes: "Of course the Revival soon developed exercises and irregularities and again as in the days of Wesley and Whitefield, the futile and foolish effort was made to get rid of the smoke by smothering the flame. It failed as it deserved to fail, and the purifying flame burned on despite all of its own defects and against all opposition" (Candler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*, p. 182).

These physical manifestations occurred in isolated cases in other revivals. In the Great Prayer Meeting Revival of 1857 to 1860, they were prevalent only in certain districts in North Ireland. Psychologists tell of this phenomenon occurring in the times of the Crusaders. In 1384 it broke out in the lower Rhine country. It broke out in Germany in the fifteenth century. It has appeared also in Roman Catholic nunneries and at some of their miracle shrines. In the days of The Great Revival it was claimed by some who opposed these demonstra-

tions that "it was due to sympathy;" others thought it was "enthusiasm," "hypocrisy," "witchcraft," and even "possession of the devil."

Bishop Asbury claimed that "falling down" was no proof of conversion. Dr. Ramsay, in his *History of South Carolina*, wrote: "The more candid and liberal minded ascribed the exercises to the imperfections of agitated human nature to the influence of a strong passion and example aided by peculiar circumstances." Its tendency was to bring religion into disrepute. It was merely condoned, when not discouraged, by the better-educated people in all denominations.

Testimony of Eye Witnesses

An eye witness wrote as follows concerning this phenomenon: "As well as I am able, I will describe it, as I had it from subjects, not being able to describe it experimentally. All ages, eight years and upwards, male and female, rich and poor, the members of every denomination, those in favor of it and those opposed to it and railing against it, had instantly laid motionless on the ground. Some feel its symptoms by being deeply convicted—their heads swell, their nerves relax and in an instant they become motionless and speechless, but generally retain their senses. It comes on others like an electric shock, as if felt in the great arteries of the arms or thighs, closes quick into the heart, which swells like to burst. The body relaxes and falls motionless. The hands and feet become cold, and yet the pulse is as formally, though sometimes

rather slow. Some grow weak, as not to be able to stand but do not lose their senses altogether. All refuse medical aid. They continue thus from one to twenty-four hours. Their speech returns gradually and they invariably confess they are great sinners, the vilest of the vile, and pray earnestly for mercy. They are in this condition for days. Indeed it is a miracle, that a wicked unthoughtful sinner who never could or did address himself to an audience before should rise out of one of these fits and continue for a space of two hours recommending religion and Jesus Christ to sinners." This writer adds the following story as a post-script: "A man of thirty brought a staff with a sharp nail on the end of it to prod some one. This would rouse him, he thought. He had boasted he would not fall down. However, he became affected. His friends gave him whiskey, but to no purpose. He came to later, confessing his sins and hoped for pardon through Christ."

McNemar described the phenomenon. He tells how it was first confined to spasmodic jerkings of the forearm at short intervals. Later it affected every muscle, nerve and tendon of the body. He wrote: "Nothing in nature could better represent this strange and unaccountable operation than for one to goad another, alternately on every side, with a piece of red-hot iron. The exercise commonly began in the head which would fly backward and forward, and from side to side with a quick jolt which the person would naturally labor to suppress but in vain and the more any one labored to save

himself and be sober the more he staggered and the more rapidly his twitches increased. He must necessarily go as he was stimulated, whether with a violent dash on the ground and bounce from place to place like a football or hop around with head, limbs and trunk twitching and jolting in every direction. By this strange operation the human frame was commonly transformed and disfigured, as to lose every trace of its natural appearance. Some times the head would be twitched right and left to a half round with such velocity that not a feature could be discovered, but the face appeared as much behind as before, and in the quick progressive jerk, it would seem as if the person was transmuted into some other species of creature. Head dresses were of little account among the female jerkers. Such as were seized with the jerks wrested at once not only from under their own government, but that of every one else so that it was dangerous to attempt confining them or touching them in any manner" (McNemar, *Kentucky Revival*, pp. 61, 62).

Peter Cartwright, the great Methodist itinerant, was amused as he witnessed these manifestations. He writes: "To see these proud young gentlemen and young ladies, dressed in their silks, jewelry and prunella from top to toe take the jerks would often excite my risibilities. The first jerk or so would see their fine bonnets, caps and combs fly."

Robert Johnson, another eye witness, tells this story: "I have seen men and women in solemn attitude, pondering the solemn truths which were pre-

sented, and in a moment fall from their seats, or off their feet if they happened to be standing, as helpless as though they had been shot and lie from ten to fifteen or twenty minutes, and sometimes for nearly an hour, as motionless as a person sound asleep. At other times, the whole frame could be thrown into a state of agitation, so violent, as seemingly to endanger the safety of the subject; and yet in a moment, this agitation would cease, and the persons arise in the full possession of all their bodily powers and take their seats composed and solemn, without the least sensation or pain or uneasiness. And, although the subjects were in the habit of falling anywhere and everywhere, when engaged in religious exercises, I never knew or heard of any one being injured, or even receiving a single wound or mark from contusion. Another fact, which I ascertained beyond doubt, that those who frequently lay for a considerable time, apparently insensible, and sometimes without one discernible symptom of life, except the natural warmth and color of the skin, could hear, understand and reflect on what they heard as well as or better than when in possession of all their bodily powers.

“The physical effects of the excitement on the body was by no means a desirable appendage, in the view of the sensible part of the community, but they were evidently irresistible and persons were as liable to be affected in the very act of resisting, as in any other circumstances; and many who came to mock and oppose remained to pray and returned inquiring what they must do to be saved.”

Mr. Johnson urged the people in his church, when it was on, to be quiet. "I have preached," said he, "to a crowded assembly, when more than one half of the people were lying helpless before me during the greatest part of the divine service, without the least noise or disturbance of any kind, to divert or interrupt the attention of any individual from the word spoken" (Elliott, *Life of McCurdy*, p. 79).

Modern psychology, according to Cleveland in *The Revival of the West*, gives the scientific explanation of these physical manifestations: "Modern psychological inquiry has thrown a flood of light upon the revival of 1800 and similar movements. The nervous system, with its net work of cells and fibers, reacting upon impressions from the objective and subjective world, must be considered in determining the causes underlying such periods of excitement. At the outset the emotions and the will demand attention. Emotion depends upon two factors, the organic element, that is the nervous structure itself, and the external stimulus. In each case, therefore, the reaction upon a certain stimulus will be determined by the mentality of the particular individual receiving the stimulus. In many cases mere suggestion is sufficient to provoke immediate reaction. The will plays a most important part in determining whether or not a certain stimulus shall be reacted upon, or the impulse to act inhibited. Yet even the will is in certain cases powerless to prevent reaction, and muscular movement follows in spite of and in direct opposition to

the will of the individual. The inter-fibril connection of the cells of the nervous system is so complete and intricate that the overcharging of one cell may lead to the discharging of cells other than the one directly stimulated, resulting in most unexpected reaction.

“In considering phenomena such as the revival of 1800 presented in the bodily exercises, not only the mental state of those subject to the exercises, but the atmosphere surrounding them must be borne in mind. The individual by himself and the individual as an element in a large unit, as for instance the crowd, may present two very different mental aspects. Again and again the revival reports make mention of the deist, the scoffer, the merely curious onlooker who was seized by the particular exercise in vogue at the meeting he chanced to attend. Drawn in spite of himself into the spirit of the hour, he reacted upon the suggestion made by the vehement preacher, the animated song, the loud-voiced exhortation of some one who had just recovered from an attack and fell prey to the exercise.”

“There is no doubt that the exercises were in many cases involuntary. Others again so earnestly desired the impulses that they yielded to the first impulse, which might have been controlled. Still others entered upon them voluntarily impelled by the desire to attract attention and by various other motives. The morbid initiative faculty so strong in humanity had much to do with the epidemics which resulted from the efforts of various individuals to

promote a revival at the end of the eighteenth century. In the medical world, the diseases of chorea, epilepsy and hysteria are known to be attended with muscular movements and other symptoms identical with those displayed in the epidemics which attended the period of great religious excitement already passed under review. Pathologically it is difficult to define exactly the epidemics which prevailed during the revival of 1800. A large number of cases fall under the head of chorea, hysteria or ecstasy. Just what proportion were epileptic can not be ascertained. . . . It is evident that no supernatural agency is necessary to explain the peculiar bodily exercises that attended The Great Revival in the western country. The individual seized either at home or in the public, had previous to the seizures received some suggestion through the sense of sight or hearing that resulted in bodily reaction'' (*Ibid*, pp. 116, 117, 123, 127).

The opposers of the revival attributed it to the measures employed—the terrific character of the preaching, the earnest and vehement appeals to the conscience, and the protracted exercises—all of which are calculated to affect persons of weak nerves and infirm health, and to produce these bodily effects.

Others attributed it to sympathy. Sympathy is that principle in the nature which enables us to partake of the feelings of others. This did not explain the reason for its results on deists, profligates and others who came to oppose and ridicule. Others said it was "the result of the mental excite-

ment arising from the influence of the Spirit and truth of God, upon the hearts and conscience of those who were its subjects." The body often suffers from the exalted state of mind. There is nothing unscriptural or unphilosophical in this admission. Some who had deepest conviction had no "bodily affection," even though their temperament appeared equally susceptible to such impressions. Many who viewed it from a distance believed this bodily exercise was encouraged by the minister who believed it was a decisive evidence of true piety. Macurdy declared this was not true. "They had no control over it. There it was, and we could do nothing with it."

The leaders were careful to teach their people "that, although in many cases it was closely connected with real religion, it was distinct from it, and afforded no evidence that those who were its subjects, were for this reason partakers of God's saving grace. However differently men may decide with regard to the nature and origin of the bodily affection, there seems to have been no doubt in the minds of those present at the time and best informed on the subject that the revival with which it was connected was a genuine work of God." The revival succeeded, not because of the physical manifestations, but in spite of them.

Chapter VIII.

SUBSEQUENT REVIVAL WAVES

THE Great Revival was long sustained. For fully a generation its helpful influence continued to be marked in the life of the American churches. In this respect it differed from the Great Awakening of Whitefield's day. Leonard Bacon contrasts these two revivals: "In one most important particular the Revival of 1800 was happily distinguished from the Great Awakening of 1740. It was not done and over with at the end of a few years, and then followed by a long period of reaction. It was the beginning of a long period of vigorous and abundant life moving forward, not indeed with even and unvarying flow, yet with continuous current, marked with those alternations, which seem, whether for good or for evil, to have become fixed characteristics of the American church history" (Bacon, *History of American Christianity*).

Within this sustained revival movement there were a number of outstanding revival waves. The main theater of action for The Great Revival shifted from Kentucky to central and western New York.

Revivals and Revivalists in the First and Second Decades

Notable revivals occurred in the first and second decades of the nineteenth century, especially

following the War of 1812. As the work declined, the people recalled what God had done so recently for them. This was especially true of the Baptist churches in Vermont. The Sheridan Church sent a request to the Vermont Association to appoint a particular day, and recommend that it be kept, by all the churches belonging to the body, as a day of fasting and prayer. This request was cordially received and adopted, and the fifteenth of October, 1816, was appointed. Eight hundred and sixty-five were added to the Vermont Association within a year after that day of prayer. This revival spread all through that section of the country, as seen in the reports of the various associations of Baptist churches; Shaftesbury added 510; Woodstock, 178; Fairfield, 209; Barre, 65, and Danville Association 124 new members. That was a total of 1,951 added to Baptist churches in Vermont during this revival.

Other Baptist associational annuals record great ingatherings at this time. The Saratoga Association in 1816 reported 24 churches and 263 baptisms. The next year they reported 28 churches and 713 baptisms. Their total membership increased from 2,264 members to 3,479 members. Hudson River Association increased from 988 to 1,267 members in the same year. They reported 273 baptisms. The Berkshire Association almost doubled its baptisms, increasing from 138 to 263.

Elder Edward Barker was a great revival pastor among the Baptists. His pastorates were in both the Shaftesbury and Saratoga Associations. His story of the revival of 1815-16 in his own church

was published in the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*. The following is an extract:

“For four years past there have been but few added to the church. In this time we have endured the trials common to the people of God attended with great want of the spirit of devotion and practical piety; while coldness and stupidity have much prevailed among the professors of religion. But for two years past there has been more attention. On the 20th of January, 1816, the work became more visible; several persons related their experiences to the church and were received as candidates for baptism. The day following I baptized one of them and on the 28th, five more; and on February 11th, two. From this time the work spread into different parts of the vicinity, and went on like the work of God against all opposition. I baptized 228, from the 21st of January to July 28th, making in the whole since September 28th 1815 to the 28th of this instance July, 230. These have all been added to the church.”

In another letter, written March 22nd, 1817, he wrote:

“God is gloriously carrying on his work in these parts. Although it has subsided within our vicinity, yet in the following towns, or at least in some of them, it has progressed, namely: Hartford, Argyle, Kingsbury, Queensbury, Fort Ann, Granville, Cambridge and Salem or White Creek, all in the county of Washington. According to the best information I can get, about 840 persons have professed religion within a little more than a year

past in the above towns'' (*Baptist Missionary Magazine*, Vol. IV., pp. 356, 357).

Hotchkiss writes: "The settlement of Western New York was coeval with the French Revolution, and with the reign of infidelity in that unhappy country. French principles, including the most rank infidelity and atheism, were zealously published in the United States and embraced by the vast multitudes throughout the land. Infidelity threatened to subvert all religious institutions in the nation. Some who were deeply imbued with these principles were among the first settlers of Western New York, and were zealous in propagating their sentiments; or, at least, frequent in throwing out sneers against the Bible and its doctrines, or against ministers of the Gospel and professing Christians. But a much larger proportion of the first white inhabitants of Western New York were not of this class. True, many of them were thoughtless on the subject of religion, immersed in the concerns of this life, and regardless of the institutions of the Gospel: though they would acknowledge a belief in the reality and importance of Christianity, and the necessity of an experimental acquaintance with it, in order to final salvation. Others wished to see the institutions of the gospel established, and in operation, as they had been accustomed to them in places from which they had emigrated. They desired that their children might be trained up under the influence of religious institutions. They loved the house of God, and an opportunity to hear the Word preached was to them a feast

of fat things. At any time they were ready with their families to go miles on foot or in an ox sled to hear a sermon when notice was given that a missionary would preach.

“Where two or three families of this description located contiguous to each other, generally, public worship on the Sabbath was immediately commenced. In numbers of instances this was the case in neighborhoods where but a single male professor of religion resided. The exercises of such meetings commonly consisted of prayer, singing and reading a printed sermon. In some cases where there was no individual willing to lead in prayer a neighborhood would assemble on the Sabbath, read a sermon, and perhaps sing a psalm.

“But in very many places regular public worship on the Sabbath was not maintained for years after the settlement commenced. The habits of the people were loose and irreligious. The Sabbath was made a day of business, visiting or pastime. Drinking and carousing were frequent concomitants. A new generation grew up under the influence of these irreligious examples, and were perhaps, worse than their fathers” (Hotchkiss, *History of Western New York*, p. 216ff.).

Many of these churches were revived in The Great Revival wave which swept the country about the close of the century. As a result, many were added to the churches and many new churches were organized. In 1799-1800, five churches were organized; namely, in “Canandaigua, No. 11, now Victor, West Bloomfield, North Bristol and Middletown,

now Naples. Between one and two hundred were added to the churches in the county of Ontario. An association of churches was organized in 1800.

Several chapters are devoted to revivals in Hotchkin's *History of Western New York*. He shows the influence of The Great Revival in the early days of these new settlements, and also in the decades which followed. He writes: "From the period of the close of the revival of 1799, no very extended revival occurred again for a number of years. Some circumscribed instances took place; but as a general thing the churches were increased by additions of members emigrating from eastern churches, and by converts from the world brought in singly. In these ways many were added to the existing churches and many new churches were organized. Occasionally a revival occurred, generally, however, of a circumscribed character."

The Presbytery of Geneva, then the only Presbytery in western New York, tells of revivals in their records: "One notices a rising tide in 1813. For example a revival is reported at Homer in which 160 were added to the Presbyterian Church and between 70 and 80 to the Baptist."

Hotchkin writes: "Up to this period the revivals in Western New York were comparatively few. . . . They were of an isolated character and nothing like a period of general revival had occurred since that of 1799, though the churches in Western New York had increased in number, not only by immigration, but also by conversions from the ranks of the ungodly."

“But the time had arrived in which God was disposed to display his power and grace in a more signal manner, in building up Zion in these parts of the earth. The years 1816 and 1817, in Western New York, were peculiarly years of the right hand of the Most High. The revivals in those years were more numerous, and of greater extent, than in former years.” Hotchkin lists here the names of forty-nine churches which enjoyed revivals. Then he adds: “The writer believes that revivals of greater or less power were experienced in a number of other congregations, but he has not the data to determine the point with certainty” (*Ibid.*, pp. 132, 133).

Asahel Nettleton

The outstanding revivalist of this period was Asahel Nettleton. He was born Apr. 21, 1783, on a farm in North Killingworth, Conn. His parents were communicants in the Half-way Covenant plan. He was converted in 1800. In the language of the age, “he was slain by the law and made alive by Christ.” Samuel I. Mills, of the Haystack Prayer Meeting fame, was born on the same day. Both were in Yale at the same time, both hoped to be foreign missionaries, and both failed to realize their dreams. Mr. Nettleton was licensed to preach in 1811, and chose to work in the more destitute parts of his native State. Timothy Dwight said of him, when he was a student, “He will make one of the most useful men this country has ever seen.” This expectation was fully realized.

After receiving a license to preach, Mr. Nettleton refused to consider himself a candidate for settlement, because he intended and expected to engage in missionary service "as soon as the Providence of God should prepare the way." He chose, therefore, to commence his labors in waste places and in some of "the most desolate parts of the Lord's vineyard." He accordingly went to the eastern parts of Connecticut, on the borders of Rhode Island. He preached here for a few months in several places, which had been overrun by fanatical sects of various descriptions.

A half century before, on this very field, Davenport had a fanatical ministry as an irresponsible evangelist. While here Nettleton heard the story of these excesses and witnessed the baneful influence still existing after so long a time. It was here that Nettleton first became suspicious of anything that was new or unusual in religion. Here he commenced his lifelong opposition to what later was called "New Measures." Davenport's erratic career was fresh in all minds in the region in which Nettleton was working. Pamphlets showing reputed ill results of Whitefield's and Edwards' work were on the book shelves of these people. Nettleton faced all this, and out of it came the convictions which molded his illustrious career.

A visit to South Britain brought him in contact with Dr. Bennet Tyler, who afterwards became his biographer. A revival was in progress in the place, and Nettleton accepted the urgent invitation to stay a week. From this time on, for the next ten years,

he was constantly in revival meetings. His almost invariable rule was to work in parishes with their settled pastors. His method at first was to hold one or two meetings during the week and spend the rest of the time conversing with the people individually. His method was "never to encourage hope, but warned converts of the danger of self-deception. He dwelt much upon the distinguishing marks of genuine conversion."

Here and in other places great success attended his labors. Once it is recorded that people were so overcome that they had to be carried out of the church. His complete self-control and executive ability enabled him to keep order. At first he thought of remaining only long enough in a place to see a revival started; later he saw the necessity of prolonging his labors.

He labored in scores of places in New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts, covering a period of ten or eleven years, until his health broke in 1822. A siege of typhus fever undermined his health for the rest of his life. For two years he rarely preached. He visited Maine and Quebec in quest of health. After that, he was not able to preach constantly; sometimes only once or twice on a Sabbath, without any extra meetings, or devoting much time to visiting from house to house. A revival broke out at Bethlehem in the fall of 1824, and he worked there until his strength failed. He was in Brooklyn in the spring of 1825. Pastor Cobb, with whom he labored at Taunton that fall, wrote of him: "He was not the leader, but only an assistant

in the work. My people never before entertained and cherished so affectionate a regard for their pastor as in this revival.”

As soon as he recovered somewhat from his sickness in 1824, he carried out a plan which had been in his mind for some time. He compiled a hymnbook, entitled *Village Hymns*. Four years before the General Association of Connecticut had appointed a committee to “devise measures for the prosperity of religion within their limits.” One of the first items proposed was a selection of hymns. For four years no progress had been made. Feeling the great need for such a collection, he made one. These *Village Hymns* had an extensive circulation and went into several editions.

His biographer, Dr. Tyler, writes: “Dr. Nettleton’s methods were remarkable sane and discriminating. He had an abhorance of anything that savored of fanaticism. His doctrines conformed to the Calvinistic standards of the age in which he lived. He emphasized a dependence on the Holy Spirit as the indispensable condition of a revival. Ministers and churches were not encouraged to try and get up a revival, but when sovereign grace gave indications that the set time to favor Zion had come he believed in a wise and faithful use of means. To this end he made use of preaching, house-to-house visitation, and inquiry meetings for enforcing the truth and instructing seekers. The results of his work were invariably lasting. Of the thousands converted under his preaching, so well were they grounded in the fundamentals of the

Christian faith, that very few afterwards fell away into apostacy."

From 1825 to 1830 he labored in New England, New York and in the South. Although handicapped by ill health, he witnessed great revivals. In 1831 he visited England, spending a year there and in Ireland and Scotland. He preached frequently, and was called on again and again to give an account of the American revivals. He returned to America in 1832. After a few months in New England, he went South. While there, he was appointed professor of Pastoral Duty in the Theological Seminary then located in East Windsor. (This later became the Hartford Theological Seminary.) Although he declined on account of ill health, he did lecture acceptably to students from time to time. The last ten years of his life were spent at East Windsor, where he died May 16, 1844. His last words were: "While ye have the light, walk in the light."

Nettleton was the pioneer of the professional evangelists in America. Although he opposed the establishment of such an order, nevertheless by his unique ministry he established the precedent of an outside leader assisting local pastors for protracted periods in special evangelistic campaigns.

Revivals in the Third and Fourth Decades

There were outstanding revivals in the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century. Charles G. Finney was the outstanding revivalist of this period. His life career, however, does not in-

clude all or even most of the great evangelistic successes of this period. Revivals came to hundreds of churches which he could not reach. His ministry was a great inspiration in that he clearly taught and constantly demonstrated the revival secret.

Hotchkin, the Presbyterian historian, records many revivals in the third decade. He reports revivals during 1819 and 1820 "in Sherburne, Smyrna, Smithfield, and surrounding towns; Homer, Truxton, Coventry, Newark Valley, Ithaca, Ludlowville, Genoa, Auburn, Onondaga, Marcellus, Geneva, Phelps, Jamestown and Elliott. Some of these were very extensive, and in view of them it may be truly said that a great company were obedient to the faith" (Hotchkin, *History of Western New York*, Chap. XV.).

He reports that during 1822, 1823, 1824 and 1825 there were "gracious visitations of the Holy Spirit" in fifty-six different churches. The year 1826 was peculiarly distinguished in Western New York as a year of the right hand of the Most High. He tells of revivals in thirty-five different churches.

An outstanding revival came to the church at Ithaca: "Upon the congregation at Ithaca the Holy Spirit has come down with resistless and overwhelming power. . . . During the two past years religion was in a very declining state, especially the last, and it was not until the month of June, 1826, that the state of things became more encouraging. At that time three pious females, taking a view of the desolation of Zion, had their hearts

drawn out in prayer to Israel's God. . . . Through their united exertions a female prayer-meeting was revived which had been suffered to go down. The spirit of prayer thus enkindled continued to increase and spread until about the middle of October, when the whole church seemed to travail in birth for souls. The spirit of agonizing prayer was in most cases not general, but specific in its objects, taking hold of particular individuals. . . . These prayers in many cases received the most signal answers. . . . For some time after the commencement of the work, it was chiefly confined to children, but afterward it almost completely left the children and passed up to persons of mature age. Of the 250 hopeful converts are to be found persons of every age, of every class of society, of every complexion of character and of every grade of mental cultivation." Revivals came to many other New York churches.

"Six hundred and seven new members were added to the nineteen churches from which reports have been received. These victories in Cayuga Presbytery serve as a 'specimen of the revivals generally in Western New York at that period.' During the year 1827, the visitations of the Holy Spirit were in a considerable degree intermitted, though in places refreshings were enjoyed. . . . In 1828 the number of congregations visited was much greater and dispersed over all parts of the field, and the number of souls hopefully converted to God, was very considerable. . . . The revivals in 1829 were less numerous than in the preceding year. The congregations in which there were special out-

pourings of the Spirit in 1830 were more numerous than in 1829" (*Ibid.*).

From western New York and the Presbyterians, we turn to eastern New York, Vermont and Massachusetts and to the Baptist churches. The Baptist historian writes: "The years 1822, 1824, 1825, 1827 and 1831 were seasons of the largest increases by revivals of religion in which several of the churches were favored with rich out-pourings of the Holy Spirit and an ingathering of souls to their fellowship."

The fourth decade was pre-eminently a revival decade. Hotchkiss writes: "It was in the year 1831, that the most extraordinary displays of the power and grace of God in reviving his work and converting souls in Western New York, were exhibited. This year was emphatically a 'year of the right hand of the Most High'." The author has the names of nearly sixty congregations which shared in this blessed work, and he entertains no idea that the list is by any means complete. The work of grace was extensive and powerful, not only in Western New York, but generally throughout the bounds of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and in the Congregational Churches of New England" (*Ibid.*).

In the *Narrative of the State of Religion*, presented to the General Assembly in May 1832, the following reference was made to this general revival wave: "It is our delightful privilege to report that sixty-eight Presbyteries have been blessed with the special influence of the Holy Spirit, reviv-

ing the churches and bringing perishing sinners to the saving knowledge of the truth." "In these highly favored Presbyteries, about seven hundred congregations are reported as having been thus visited in rich mercy. Several Presbyteries have had their whole territory pervaded by a heavenly influence and every congregation has become a harvest field for the ingathering of souls to the fold of the Good Shepherd. Reports came in verification of this from the various Synods."

"The revivals of 1831 in Western New York," writes Hotchkin, "were more general and brought accessions to the churches in such immense numbers, that they constitute an era in its history, deserving a peculiar notice." Revivals continued, throughout this fourth decade, among the Presbyterian churches of western and central New York, with a recognized spiritual drought in 1836. Revivals also were less numerous in 1838. Finney's great revival in Rochester in 1830-1831, had much to do in scattering revival fires in this section as well as in other parts of our country.

The Outstanding Revivalist of This Period

Charles G. Finney was the outstanding revivalist of this period, the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century.

Charles Grandison Finney was born in Warren, Litchfield County, Conn., Aug. 29, 1792, within a year of John Wesley's death. Finney died Aug. 16, 1875, just as D. L. Moody was coming into prominence. Without Christian parentage or training,

he was convicted of sin through reading his Bible while practicing law in Adams, N. Y., at the age of twenty-nine. He went into the woods, and, alone with God, in deep anguish of heart, confessed his sins, and asked God to forgive and save him. He rested on God's promise of salvation. He writes: "I then saw clearly the atonement of Christ; and instead of having righteousness of my own, all that was necessary was to give up my sins and accept Christ."

He refused to plead the lawsuit he had in hand, saying he had a retainer from the Lord Jesus Christ to plead His cause. Finney left his office to converse with those whom he might meet about their souls. "I spoke with many persons that day, but I can not remember one whom I spoke with who was not soon after converted."

The news of Finney's conversion spread through the town, creating much excitement, for he had been given up by the pastor and others as a hopeless case. That evening, "without any appointment being made, the people with one consent seemed to rush to the place of worship. We had a wonderful meeting; and from that day a meeting every evening. The young people were converted one after another with great rapidity."

In the spring Finney received a commission as a home missionary from the Female Missionary Society of the Western District of New York. He began preaching in the schoolhouse at Evan's Mills. Although some were convicted by every sermon, he was not satisfied. He gave up a day to fasting

and prayer. That night there was such powerful conviction of sin in the meeting that he was sent for all through the night to deal with persons who were "under awful distress of mind." The deists of the place, who were banded together to resist the revival, were nearly all converted.

The Great Rochester Revival

In 1830, Finney went to the city of Rochester. The churches were divided and in a low state of spirituality. Because of its need and the difficulties in the way, Finney felt drawn to the place. The work impressed especially the lawyers and leading men. A mighty spirit of prayer prevailed among the Christians. Some gave nearly their whole time and strength to prayer. The students of one high school became so convicted that they could not recite. The skeptical principal sent for Finney, and was himself converted with many of the scholars. From this one school forty of the converts became ministers, and a number foreign missionaries. So effective and widespread was the revival in the city that years afterwards a legal authority upon crime said: "I have been examining the records of the criminal courts, and I find that whereas our city has increased threefold since that revival, there are not one-third as many prosecutions as there had been up to that time. Such is the wonderful influence which that revival had upon the community." This revival "made a great change in the moral state and subsequent history of Rochester." Through letters written by Chris-

tians, through the press, through travelers and otherwise, the work spread throughout the land. Dr. Beecher, who at first had opposed the work, speaking of the results of the year, said: "That was the greatest revival of religion that the world has ever seen in so short a time. One hundred thousand were reported as having connected themselves with churches; this is unparalleled in the history of the church."

In 1835, Finney accepted a professorship at Oberlin College, recently organized. For two or three years he spent his summers in Oberlin and his winters in New York City. However, he made Oberlin his home for the next forty years. He conducted revivals in Rochester in 1842 when a thousand submitted themselves to God. He conducted successful campaigns in Boston in 1856, 1857 and 1858; in Providence in 1842, and in Hartford, Conn., in 1855.

He made two visits to England, preaching in Whitefield's Tabernacle in London. He preached with such power that more than fifteen hundred attended the after meetings for inquirers. Thousands were converted. Some of the clergymen of the Church of England received such blessings that they organized daily prayer meetings in their parishes, and hundreds were brought to Christ.

Finney was active to the end of his long life, resigning the pastorate in 1872, but retaining his lectureship to the end. Shortly before his death he said to one of the professors: "When I am dead, do not go to the graveyard to find me. I shall not

be there. I shall be more alive than you are.” He took his exodus from earth to heaven Aug. 16, 1875.

There arose a number of outstanding evangelists or revivalists at the close of this period. The greatness of Finney’s life and ministry should not totally eclipse the important ministry of these men. James Gallagher labored largely in the South. He wrote *Adam and David* and *Western Sketches*. He was chaplain of the House of Representatives at Washington during 1852 and 1853.

Contemporary with Gallagher were four other evangelists; namely, Samuel G. Orton, Daniel Baker, Jedidiah Burchard and Orson Parker.

As the extended period of The Great Revival came to a close in 1842, James Caughy, the first of the Methodist evangelists was commencing his illustrious career. He left a Methodist pastorate in central New York State to conduct revival meetings in Canada. From there he went to Great Britain, where he did most of his work. It is claimed that Gen. William Booth was converted under Caughy’s ministry.

The Baptists had four outstanding revivalists whose ministry, commencing in the period of The Great Revival, extended far into that century: Thomas Sheardown, Jabez Swan, Elder Jacob Knapp and Emerson Andrews.

The evangelists should not hide the fame of many illustrious revivalist pastors, who on their own fields and on the fields of others labored with great success. Practically every Methodist circuit

rider and pastor was an evangelist. Other denominations possessed strong evangelistic pastors. This list includes Lyman Beecher, Edward Payson, Edward Griffin, Gardiner Spring, and Edward N. Kirk, in whose church and ministry Dwight Lyman Moody was converted. Associated with these were hundreds of less eminent, but very useful, evangelistic pastors in the East and in the West.

The Declining Revival Waves

There was a marked decrease in revivals in the fifth decade of the nineteenth century. Dean Wright, of Yale, attributed this decline to the excitement occasioned by the Millerite Movement and the failure of their predictions concerning the second coming of Christ. A study of the whole revival field shows that Miller was not wholly responsible for this decline. Many revivalists, good and bad, had entered the field. There was probably a reaction to the methods of the revivalists.

The Baptist churches of New York State served as an example of this decline. Previous to the Millerite Movement of 1843, there was a continued increase of baptisms. Their churches for three years had averaged 6,346 baptisms. In 1843, as a result of the Millerite Revival, they reported 15,794 baptisms. In 1844 they reported only 4,028 baptisms. The decline was still more marked in the three years which followed, when the yearly average was as low as 2,337 baptisms.

This decline continued until 1857. Then the Northern States enjoyed another great general re-

vival which visited all parts of the English-speaking world. It was a "Revival with a Million Converts."

Subsequent Revivals at Yale

Prof. H. B. Wright has written a number of chapters on "Revivals at Yale," in the volume *Two Centuries of Christian Activities at Yale*. His source of information was a work on revivals written by Professor Goodrich, who was Timothy Dwight's revival successor at Yale. Professor Wright tells of the revivals which occurred after Dwight's death.

The years 1820 to 1824 were each marked by a revival of religion. The total number of converts in these five awakenings was over 150. The first two revivals were the result of previous awakenings in the New Haven city churches, and both received some impetus from the labors of outside preachers and city pastors. The third revival originated in a voluntary Bible class. This class had a large attendance. Week's *Catechism* was used as a basis of study. It was followed by a course of lectures on the doctrines under discussion. Little is known of the extent of the revivals of 1823 and 1824.

The revivals drew a sharp distinction between the regenerate and unregenerate. The latter gave expression to their animosity. A number of students, in 1824, fired a charge of gunpowder in the old chapel, demolishing the communion table, blackening the pulpit and breaking every window pane

in the building. In those days a student who reported another to the authorities was called a "blue skin." When this outrage occurred, over one hundred students enrolled in the "Blue Skin Club," and, as a result, the offenders were located and dismissed from the school.

The revival of 1825 followed the formation of the Blue Skin Club. Professor Goodrich writes: "In the spring of 1825 there was another and extensive outpouring of the Holy Spirit. One who was then a member of the Senior class has since informed me that the commencement of that better state of feeling in the church which led to this revival may be traced to the humble preserving efforts of a single individual of but little standing and influence in the college. Deeply affected at the thoughtless state of his impenitent companions, for whose salvation nothing was done by the children of God, he invited one and another of his brethren in the church to his room and requested them to unite with him in prayer and besought them to put forth that influence which they possessed to so much greater extent than they did, in endeavors to awaken the brethren in prayer and united effort for the conversion of those around them. God smiled upon his humble labor. Some of the leading members of the church were reclaimed for their backsliding and a spirit of fervent supplication was given them from on high. The revival which followed in the present instance was apparently the means of conversion of more than thirty souls. It was a solemn and searching work" (*Ibid.*).

In the years 1827, 1828 and 1830 revivals occurred, and, with the one of 1825, won more than a hundred for Christ. Many of them became eminent workers for Christ. The first organized temperance society connected with Yale was formed following the revival of 1825. The members pledged to abstain from intoxicating beverages during their undergraduate days. In 1822 Yale Divinity School grew out of a petition of fifteen students. This school exerted a strong evangelistic influence.

The revival of 1831 was the greatest in Yale's history. One hundred and four students united with the church. Seventy-four of these made public profession in the chapel before the student body. This led to a revival in New Haven resulting in nine hundred professed conversions. The students were affected so thoroughly that for a year not a single student was disciplined by the faculty. Peter Parker, entering from Amherst for his Senior year, was among a group of students who met for prayer. They decided to visit all the professed Christians and urge them to live a deeper and more consecrated life. Some resented this. A large group came together in a Bible class taught by Professor Goodrich. Those who remained at Yale during the winter vacation met daily for prayer. A revival commenced in earnest at the beginning of the winter term. Practically every student was reached. Horace Bushnell, then a tutor at Yale, hesitated until the sense of his responsibility to the students, who so greatly admired him, led him to a complete surrender to Christ.

Out of this revival grew the Yale Volunteer Band. This band has led many Yale men into Christian service in foreign fields. Peter Parker was a notable example. The Moral Society became the Rhetorical Society in 1831. In its previous history fully a thousand students had been enlisted. It was the precursor of the college Young Men's Christian Association.

Another great revival in 1835 resulted in about fifty conversions. This also was born in a prayer group. Five Seniors at first met daily for prayer. The number later grew to fifteen. These men decided to invite all the Christian students to a prayer meeting. Dr. Day, the president of Yale, extended the invitation. Dr. Edward Kirk came from Boston. A revival started with the week of prayer and continued until the end of the term. Other revivals followed in 1836 and 1837.

A notable revival occurred in 1841 under Elder Jacob Knapp. Early that year he came to New Haven for a six weeks' campaign. Many students attended the services held in the First Baptist Church. Others opposed his "lurid and tremendous" preaching. Knapp attacked a prominent gambling house which was frequented by some of the students. As a result, thirty-eight banded themselves together to break up the revival meeting. They armed themselves with clubs and knives. Elder Knapp tells the story: "The mob was finally broken up by the following providence. One of them had sent me an abusive letter threatening my life if I did not leave the city. On the evening of

the day on which I received it, a number of the desperadoes came into the sanctuary and seated themselves in the gallery. Shortly after I had commenced preaching a rifle ball was thrown at me. Hitting the shade of the lamp, it was thrown out of its course. Brother Tearsdale immediately arose and read to the congregation the letter referred to. This letter called me 'the prince of liars' because I had related publicly how God had broken up a mob in Rochester by sending thunder and lightning. They challenged a repetition of the same. Deacon Sage, of Rochester, who was providentially present, arose and corroborated my statement. No sooner had silence been regained than a terrific flash of lightning blazed through the house, followed by an awful peal of thunder and torrents of rain. The marvelous coincidence effectively dispersed the mob." Two of that band were converted.

The revival continued after Elder Jacob Knapp's departure from New Haven. Dr. Day sent for Edward Kirk to come and reach those not won by Elder Knapp. He came and preached for three weeks, assisting Dr. N. W. Taylor. Inquiry meetings were conducted. Student prayer meetings also were held in the students' rooms. The interest was so great that the annual Junior ball was omitted that year. As a result of the labors of these three men, about seventy-five men were converted. The feeling toward Knapp had so completely changed that the students presented him with a purse of \$125 and a testimonial signed by nearly seventy students.

Prof. Henry Wright calls attention to the decline which existed between 1842 and 1857, not only at Yale, but throughout the country. "The excitement caused by the Millerite agitation in 1842, followed by the failure of the prophesies of its leaders, caused many people to look with distrust upon all religion. This movement, however, did not seem to gain any foothold at Yale."

Revival at Williams

Special mention should be made of Samuel I. Mills, who entered Williams College in the spring of 1805. Having been converted in the revival at Torrington, Litchfield County, in 1798 and 1799, he was prepared to stimulate a revival at Williams. The work continued throughout the summer. Eighteen were added to the church, of whom nine became ministers of the gospel.

In 1808, they formed a secret society to extend their influence to other colleges. They aroused the missionary spirit of Pliny Fisk, who afterwards lived and died in Palestine. They held the famous Haystack Prayer Meeting. In 1809 they carried their society to Andover, where it incited the first missionary band to go out to India in 1812. This band included Luther Rice, Gordon Hall and Adoniram Judson.

In January, 1812, another revival, under the preaching of Nott, broke out at Williams. It started in the town and finally came to the college. There were eight revivals in this college in twenty-six years.

Revivals at Amherst

There were outstanding revivals at Amherst College in 1827, 1828 and 1831. Dr. Heman Humphrey, the president of Amherst, wrote as follows: "The revival began in the church, as is most commonly the case. For several weeks there was manifest increase of concern for those who were ready to perish, till there came to be mighty wrestings with the Angel of Covenant, such as I believe always prevail. I need not tell you that these times of refreshing have been of inestimable value to the college, by raising the standards of morals, and diffusing a strong religious influence throughout our whole youthful community. During the ten years the institution has now existed there has been a decided average majority of professed Christians in the four classes. In some years more than two-thirds have been professors. About one-half of the number of the students who entered the college without piety, since it was established have, as we trust, found the pearl of great price, before completing their academic course."

Revivals at Dartmouth

Dr. Nathan Lord, president of Dartmouth, writing in 1832, gave the following testimony: "The memory of our present neighbors extends no further back than 1803. Then, apparently in connection with the appointment of a new professor of theology, and a more direct influence of religious instruction than had been previously used, the minds

of the students generally became religiously affected, and twenty-five gave evidence of conversion. From that time until 1815 the college was not without more or less apparent divine influence. In that year a scene of wonderful divine influence occurred, at once, and without a premonition, the Spirit of God descended and saved the great body of the students. A general and almost instantaneous solemnity prevailed. Almost before Christians became aware of God's presence, the impenitent were deeply convicted of sin, beseeching instruction of the officers. The chapel, the recitation room, every place of meeting became a place of weeping and presently rejoicing, so that in a few weeks alone about sixty were supposed to have become Christians. Not one of the apparent conversions at that time is known to have forfeited a Christian standing. Most of them are ministers of the gospel, a few are missionaries, and all are using their influence for Christ."

"Revivals occurred afterwards from 1819-1821, and in 1826, the latter perhaps more extensive than any other. Within the last eighteen months (1831-1832) the college has received a divine blessing and about twenty-five young men united with the church."

Revival in College of New Jersey

There was a spiritual drought for forty years in the College of New Jersey. The military enthusiasm of the Revolutionary War broke up the college arrangements. This was followed by a wave

of infidelity and atheism which was unfavorable to an interest in religious matters. When Dr. A. Green became president of the college in 1812, hardly a student possessed a Bible. To change this condition they required every student to memorize the catechism of the church of which he was a member. Bible chapters were also assigned, followed by recitation and examination. Dr. Green tells what happened:

“For nearly a year past a large proportion of the students have attended all the religious services of the college with more than ordinary seriousness. In November, 1814, there was an increase of the degree of seriousness and of the number of those in whom it was visible. Every religious service, both on secular days and on the Sabbath, was attended with a solemnity that was very impressive. In the second week of January, however, without any unusual occurrence in providence, without any alarming event, without any special instruction or other means that might be supposed particularly adapted to interest the mind, the effect became intense; and in about forty weeks, there were very few individuals in the college who were not deeply impressed with the importance of spiritual and eternal things. There was scarcely a room, perhaps not one, that was not a place of earnest secret devotion. For a time it seemed as if the whole of our charge was pressing into the Kingdom of God. This state of things continued without much variation to the present time. The result is that of the one hundred and five students, there are

somewhat more than fifty, in regard to whom, so far as the time will permit us to judge, favorable hopes may be entertained that they are the subjects of renewing grace. There are twelve or fifteen more who still entertain such promising impressions of religion as to authorize a hope that the issue may be favorable, and nearly all the remainder show a great readiness to attend the social exercises of religion."

Dr. Green told the means which were honored of God in producing such a revival: "First and chiefly, the study of the Holy Scriptures. . . . God has remarkably honored and blessed his own Word. . . . The revealed truth has been applied to their consciences by the Holy Spirit, its author. . . . A Prayer Meeting was held every Friday evening, at which one of the Theological Professors commonly made an address. A Prayer Meeting was held every evening among themselves, at which a large proportion of the whole college attended. Smaller and more select associations for prayer were also formed."

Chapter IX.

THE MESSAGE OF THE GREAT REVIVAL

A REVIVAL can not be disassociated from the doctrines or truths which its revivalists preached. The great evangelical truths have been emphasized in all revivals of religion. The cross is always central. Its related truths or "doctrines of grace," as they called them, become the content of all evangelical preaching. The revival of these truths is common to all general spiritual awakenings. However, there is usually some one doctrine which is especially emphasized. Burns stresses the fact: "First of all we see that revivals in every case fall back upon simplicity. They cut through the accumulated doctrines and subtle complexities of the schools until they arrive at some living message, some aspect of truth which has been forgotten or has been so overlaid by tradition as to become lifeless. . . . It attempts to rid the church and the individual soul of the heavy encumbrances imposed in a time of lifelessness and decay; times when men are more intent in proving the doctrines of the church than in living them. Its central effort thus is to get back to the fountain sources of inspiration and life.

"When we analyze these profound messages which have sprung from the lips of God's messengers in those great days of revival, we perceive

one message which is never absent, one message which is at heart of every such movement and the vital fire of all its noblest emotion. This is the message of the Cross. The reader may be safely challenged to name any revival which has taken place in the Christian Church of which this is not true.

“It is a significant fact also, and we point this out without disparagement of those who do not hold this doctrine, that neither Unitarianism or Deism nor any other system which rejects the Cross, knows anything of revivals. Their ranks are recruited from those who become skeptical in the days of depression.

“With Christ and the message of the Cross as its central fire, each revival also is characterized either by the revivifying of some doctrine coldly held by the discovery of some new aspect of divine truth, revealed in scripture but lost sight of” (Burns, *Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders*).

“The Reformation is the supreme example of the later. Justification by faith is one of the clearest of Pauline doctrines, but it was a doctrine so utterly lost sight of that it had ceased to exist for the Christian church. Ecclesiasticism so dominated men’s minds that for centuries men had read Paul’s Epistles without discovering that the words they read were diametrically opposed to the beliefs they held. . . . And this is one of the most curious facts connected with the human mind—its power to see only that which corresponds with current opinions, and of failing to see, not by

conscious rejection, but by a strange incapacity, all that opposes it. Every age is imprisoned in its own conceptions and has to be set free by the master minds which refuse to be enslaved.

“When Luther took up the Epistles of Paul, he brought to their perusal that rare type of mind, which is able to survey truth as it is, and wholly apart from the current and conventional way of looking at it. Instantly he discovered the supreme Pauline doctrine, which removed as with a stroke the vast and insufferable incubus that the church had imposed upon the shoulders of men” (*Ibid.*).

The central doctrine of The Great Revival was “human responsibility and duty.” Although this doctrine was clearly taught in the Scriptures, it had been almost universally overlooked. The belief in divine sovereignty without the necessary complement of human responsibility rested like a dead hand on the Christian church of that age. This semi-fatalism made aggressive local and world-wide evangelism impossible. It suppressed the philanthropic spirit. It hindered advance in medical science. It stifled any movement for social progress.

Halliday writes of this period: “The doctrine especially made use of was the doctrine of divine sovereignty. This doctrine had been by many perverted into semi-fatalism. The impenitent laid hold of it as a pretext for continuance in sin, or as a bluff with which to meet the minister or the layman who should broach to them the subject of their personal salvation. ‘If I am to be saved I

shall be saved, and if I am to be lost I shall be lost.' They sought to shift the burden of responsibility from conscience and place it upon God. This made necessary a change in the preacher's point of view. . . .

"In the preaching of this period, the doctrine of the sovereignty of God was still urged, but it was supplemented and complemented by the doctrine of human responsibility and duty. 'Submit to God; repent and believe.' This was the twofold call, implying both God's sovereignty and man's responsibility.

"The tendency of a few has been—admittedly was—to lay the greater stress upon the former doctrine, seeking to break down the pride and rebellion of man. The aim of the others—among whom was Dr. Nettleton—was to hold the balances evenly between the two, so as to give God his rightful place, and at the same time rouse the conscience and quicken the sense of responsibility. They have sometimes been accused of falling into semi-fatalism, as Nettleton himself was accused of doing by a writer in the *Princeton Review*. Their message was: 'Submit to God; repent and believe. It is your duty to which God holds you now and for which he will hold you responsible at the judgment bar.' The message of still others—among whom Dr. Finney is probably to be classed—was to exalt the doctrine of human responsibility, sometimes at the expense of the doctrine of divine sovereignty. The message upon which they laid peculiar stress was, 'You are a rebel against God by

voluntary disobedience. You are able to abandon your sins. It is your solemn and immediate duty to throw down your weapons of rebellion, and submit your heart, your will, your whole being to God" (Halliday, *The Church in America and Its Baptisms of Fire*, pp. 115, 116).

Emphasizing the Doctrines of Grace

Burns writes: "Of the other type of revival, which revives doctrines but coldly held, the Wesleyan Revival is a supreme example. Wesley claimed that there was nothing in his teaching which was not already written in the Articles of the Church of England, and that was true.

"Only there is a vast difference in the way men hold the same doctrines, whether they are held as supreme or as of secondary importance, whether they are alive or dead. It makes all the difference also in the life of the church, when prominence is given to the doctrines which are essential. The blighting characteristic of the church in Wesley's day was that the doctrines most insisted upon were trivial and those most essential for men's spiritual well being were sneered at. With Wesley however all this was changed. The church recovered its sense of proportion when it recovered its earnestness and when there came from its pulpits those large and enobling messages, which make its power unequalled. The change was so great it amounted to a new birth. And this is the supreme fact about revivals. They are conversions of the church as well as those of the masses who have drifted from

it. And the church is converted when it is brought back to Christ, when casting out the world, it takes up again the Cross, and, when with the message of salvation burning in its heart, it goes out again, as its Master did, to seek and save that which was lost" (Burns, *Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders*, pp. 39, 40, 41, 43).

The Great Revival of 1800, with its succeeding revival waves, was vitally related to churches representing many shades of religious beliefs. Their outstanding leaders were not all of one mind, theologically. However, a common-truth denominator permeated their preaching.

The revivalists and preachers may have differed both in their terminology and emphasis. However, to all of them the Bible was their authoritative guide; man was in a place of dreadful necessity and could not save himself; salvation must be from without; Jesus Christ was the Saviour man needed; salvation was by grace; it was appropriated by faith and obedience; regeneration was the work of the Holy Spirit; believers gave evidence of being reborn by the fruits of the Spirit.

The Gospel in Kentucky

Barton W. Stone, one of the leading participants in The Great Revival in Kentucky, wrote concerning the preaching in the Western settlements: "The distinguishing doctrine preached by us was that God loved the world—the whole world—and sent his Son to save men, on condition that they would believe on him; that the Gospel was the means of

salvation; that this means could never be effective to the end until believed and obeyed; that God required us to believe on the Son and, given sufficient evidence in his word, to produce faith, if attended to by us; that sinners are capable of understanding and believing this testimony and of acting upon it by coming to the Saviour and believing in him.

“We urged all sinners to believe now and receive salvation; that in vain they looked for the Spirit to be given them, while they remained in unbelief; that they must believe before the Spirit or salvation would be given; that God was as willing to save them now as he ever was, and that no previous qualification was regarded as necessary to believe in Jesus and come to him; that Jesus died for all, all was now ready. When we first began to preach this the people appeared to be just awakening from the sleep of ages. They seemed to see for the first time that they were responsible beings and that a refusal to accept the means appointed was a damning sin” (Tyler, *History of Disciples*, p. 13).

The Gospel According to Nettleton

Dr. Tyler wrote: “Dr. Nettleton was an uncompromising Calvinist, holding, with deepest conviction the doctrines of grace as presented in the Edwardian theology. He was jealous of the least departure from them. They were the substance of his preaching, in which he pressed home, with great emphasis, the guilt and responsibility of the impenitent, along with his entire dependence upon the

Holy Spirit in every step of recovery from an utterly lost condition. He felt it to be of the first importance to preach the doctrine of grace with great plainness, in revivals of religion. He had no confidence in those revivals in which these doctrines could not be preached. His opinion was that while the preaching of divine sovereignty and election, with their kindred doctrines, was eminently fitted to check fanaticism, and put a period to a spurious religious excitement, it was equally adapted to promote a genuine revival of religion" (Tyler, *Memoirs of Nettleton*, pp. 221, 222).

The Gospel According to Finney

Finney was a "new school" man, a moderate Calvinist, orthodox to the core on the cardinal doctrines of that system, the divinity of Christ, the atonement, man's utter sinfulness, his need of regeneration by the Holy Spirit and his salvation by grace alone. Chas. P. Bush, in *Reminiscences of Finney*, wrote: "It was simply impossible even for some ministers at that time to judge Mr. Finney justly. They were so far behind him in zeal and in consecration; his life was in fact such a scathing rebuke to their indolence and indifference, not to say worldliness and want of adaptation to the work of the ministry. Besides again, Mr. Finney tried to adapt his instructions to the times, and that crossed the prejudices of many staid and excellent men. He came like John the Baptist, preaching repentance. The churches in all that region had had a surfeit of 'inability' and 'election' and

‘divine sovereignty.’ Most of the religious teaching had somehow given the impression, whether intended or not, that we had little or nothing to do with our own salvation, except to ‘wait God’s time.’ If he sees fit to come and convert us he will; if not, we can’t help it. We must perish. It had also come to pass that sin was generally regarded as more a misfortune than a fault; it was inherited; it came with our blood and we could not help it. But one of Mr. Finney’s earliest sermons was from the words ‘O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself,’ and from which he taught us that sinners are guilty authors of their own destruction; not the innocent victims of a terrible calamity, and here he explained the nature of sin as a transgression of the law, rebellion against Divine authority the foolish wicked choice of our own in reference to God’s way” (Bush, *Reminiscences of Charles S. Finney*).

Revival Messages in Western New York

The Presbytery of Geneva, N. Y., published a narrative of revivals within its bounds in 1831. It said: “This precious work in its general features, has not been essentially different from former revivals, except that it has been more powerful, more extensive, and has enrolled among its subjects an unusual number who have been openly hostile to the truth. The doctrines which have held a prominent place in the preaching generally, are the plain and humble doctrines of the orthodox faith; the doctrines of our standards; of the Reformation and

of the Bible. These have been exhibited not as matters of controversy, but as matters of fact and faith. While sinners have been taught to regard it as consisting of their own voluntary rebellion against God, whereby as our confession of faith expresses it, 'we are utterly indisposed to all good and wholly inclined to all evil,' not the want of a power, but the want of any inclination to do the will of God. The inability predicable of the sinner in his depraved condition, has been represented as the standards of our church very forcibly express it as an 'inability of will,' regarding the sinner as bound at all times to keep the whole law, and to do the whole will of God. The doctrines of divine sovereignty and divine decrees, the doctrines of election and effectual calling, of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, justification by faith and the final perseverance of the saints, together with all those leading truths, which have long been designated, by way of distinction, the 'Doctrines of Grace' have been constantly kept in view."

Chapter X.

EMERGING EVANGELISTIC METHODS

EVANGELISTIC methods which have been used for a century emerged out of The Great Revival. What the primary colors are to the painting of a masterpiece, preaching, praying and personal witnessing are to this great religious awakening. The expression of these in new measures or methods emerged as the concern of God's people led them to launch new efforts to reach the people for Christ and the church.

The General Assembly in 1836, referring to revivals which had been enjoyed generally within the bounds of the Presbyterian Church, reported: "Sabbath schools, Bible classes, pastoral visitations; plain, direct preaching of the Word have been the instrumentality employed in promoting these revivals of religion." In the narrative of 1831, the Assembly reported: "Sabbath schools, Bible classes, the distribution of religious tracts, faithful private conversation, three or four day meetings, observing seasons of fasting and prayer, frequent prayer meetings, especially at sunrising, have been mentioned as means which God has blessed."

Hotchkin, the historian, was for forty-seven years a Presbyterian minister in the field of the revival operations. He wrote: "Whatever variety may have existed with respect to the means em-

ployed, some things, at least, are acknowledged by all to be legitimate. In every place where there has been a revival, the public and frequent preaching of the Word has been employed as a means of converting souls, with the universal acknowledgment, that it is the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ alone that can be subservient to this end. Christians have been urged to be abundant and importunate in prayer in their individual capacity for the salvation of souls and the progress of the divine work; and wherever there has been a revival it is believed that Christians have so prayed; and blessed experience has taught them that the 'effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.' In some instances Christians have agreed on an hour, as for instance, at sunrise or at nine o'clock in the evening, each by himself, or in family circle, to appropriate a season for special prayer for the descent of the Holy Spirit in his convicting and converting influences. At times they have agreed to make a particular individual the subject of special prayer. Meetings for social prayer, exhortation and religious conference, have always been connected with the revivals, and employed as means of promoting them. Meetings of the female members of the churches, by themselves, for prayer and conversation, have been much employed and found to be very useful and animating.

"Conversation with individuals on the great concerns of the soul, connected with importunate remonstrance and exhortation, has been much employed and has been the means of awakening the

attention of very many. Visiting from house to house by pastors, elders and others, was much practiced and with much effect. Sometimes committees for visitation were appointed or individuals volunteered to perform the service, so that two brethren should go in company, and visit each house in a particular district of the congregation, and have personal conversation with each individual of the families visited. In this way all the families of a congregation were sometimes visited in the same day. Perhaps, at the close of the day, or at a subsequent period, the different branches of the committee would meet to make a report of their labor and the existing state of feeling in the congregation. Such visitation, when faithfully and judiciously performed, has, at least in some instances, proved of great benefit in awakening attention and bringing members to the house of God and to an attendance on the means of grace. In connection with other labor, the distribution of religious tracts has been mentioned as attended with blessing" Hotchkin, *History of Western New York*, pp. 100, 164, 165).

In the early days of The Great Revival in New England, the measures used were comparatively few and simple. Beardsley writes: "There were no evangelists or protracted meetings, nor were extraordinary methods resorted to. The ministers, as a rule, did their own preaching, except in a few instances where neighboring pastors were invited to assist. In addition to the Sabbath services and mid-week lecture, prayer meetings were conducted

occasionally on Sabbath evenings or at some convenient time during the week. There were no anxious seats nor was there any attempt to influence the unconverted to commit themselves in public as seekers after religion. On the contrary, the subjects of this work were urged to make certain their hopes before uniting with the church or engaging in any public exercise. The principal means relied upon was the preaching of the Word. The doctrines especially emphasized were God's sovereignty, the immutability of the moral law, human depravity, the sufficiency of the atonement, the freeness of pardon through Christ, the necessity of regeneration, and the duty of submitting to God" (Beardsley, *History of American Revivals*, p. 97).

The Camp Meetings

The camp meeting in Kentucky grew out of a particular need for such gatherings. The sacramental preparatory meetings attracted people from great distances. Fowler writes: "It is creditably stated that thirty thousand were on the camp ground at Cane Ridge, Ky., at one time. . . . Of course provision for the sustenance and lodging of such a multitude for days in succession could not be provided by any one settlement of a new country, and hence the people came in families and companies. As of old the Jews went up to the Feast of Tabernacles, they came with horse teams and ox teams, carrying with them provisions, jerked meat and corn dodger, cooking utensils, beddings and tents. And hence we see that from the necessi-

ties of a new country arose the peculiar form of religious meetings, so popular with the Methodists, called 'Camp Meetings.' The inhabitants, scattered through the partially cleared forests or open prairies of the West, without church buildings or established pastors; their minds untrained to thought, yet highly susceptible to sympathetic influences; their attention for the greater part of the year engrossed by the inexorable necessities of getting a livelihood, it is evident that their religious nature only could be reached through the combined influences of sympathy, exclusive attention, popular oratory and special excitement. And these camp meetings were not the device of ingenious men to compass a desired end. They were a natural growth of a new country, springing up spontaneously like prairie flowers from virgin soil" (Fowler, *The American Pulpit*, p. 110).

It is claimed, however, that such camp meetings were held by the Baptists in Virginia in Revolutionary times. The Methodists had one in Lincoln County, North Carolina, as early as 1794, at which Wm. McKendree was one of the participating ministers. Bishop Asbury does not refer to camp meetings in his journal until 1802. Methodist leaders in Kentucky were quick to see the importance of the camp meeting, and from that day it became a great evangelistic force in American Methodism.

The camp meetings continued to exert an evangelistic influence through all the Cumberland and Ohio country until every settlement was reached. The Presbyterians later dropped the camp-meeting

method. The Methodists continued it. Wm. McKendree, a strong and judicious man, was appointed presiding elder of the Kentucky District in 1801. Later he became a bishop. He organized the camp meeting and conserved the results.

In 1811, Bishop Asbury wrote of their camp meetings: "Our Camp Meetings, I think amount to between four and five hundred annually, some of which continue for the space of six to eight days. . . . On such occasions many become the subjects of a work of grace, many experience the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. Backsliders are restored and the union of both preacher and people is greatly increased." For fifty years the camp meetings continued in the Western country.

As the camp meetings developed, they added beautiful grounds, assembly halls, cottages, and other attractions. The summer assembly was another development of the Camp Meeting idea.

Meetings for Inquirers

Meetings for inquirers gained prominence during Nettleton's ministry. They have been used extensively by most revivalists or evangelists since his day. Nettleton, while avoiding and opposing "New Measures," used the inquiry-meeting method in his work. Later it was called "The After Meeting."

According to Tyler, "Dr. Nettleton never adopted the anxious seat nor any of its kindred measures. He never requested people to rise in the Assembly to be prayed for or to signify that they

had given their hearts to God, or that they had made up their minds to attend to the subject of religion. He never encouraged females to pray and exhort in promiscuous assemblies. He never held meetings to a late hour in the night, nor did he encourage loud praying or exhorting. He did not encourage young converts, and others who had more zeal than discretion, to take the charge of religious meetings or go forth as public exhorters. He was never personal in his prayers and exhortations nor did he countenance it in others. He did not allow himself to denounce ministers and professors of religion, as cold and dead, and as the enemies of revivals. He entirely disapproved of all such measures, and considered them as suited to mar the purity of revivals, and to promote fanaticism and declension. It was such measures as these, introduced in the western revivals, that he set his face against in 1826.

“Dr. Nettleton was in the habit of appointing meetings of inquirers for those who were under religious concern; and these meetings under his management were eminently useful. They were usually conducted in the following manner: After a short address, suited to produce solemnity and to make all who were present feel that they were in the presence of a holy and heart-searching God, he would offer prayer. Then he would speak to each individual present in a low voice, unless the number was so large as to render it impossible. When that was the case, he would sometimes have one or two brethren in the ministry assist him.

He would converse with each one a short time. The particular object of this conversation was to ascertain the state of each one's mind. He would then make a solemn address giving them such counsel as he perceived to be suited to their condition; after which he closed the meeting with prayer. He usually advised them to retire with stillness and go directly to their closets" (Tyler, *Memoirs of Nettleton*, p. 221).

Protracted and Revival Meetings

We have seen the relation of sacramental occasions to The Great Revival. The Baptists, with the Saturday Covenant Meeting preceding the Communion Sunday, and the Presbyterians, with the three days of preparation prior to the Sacramental Sunday, discovered the evangelistic importance of this limited preparatory period. It became the stepping-stone in the development of evangelistic methods. It led to the more extended periods of special revival services.

Hotchkin writes concerning these meetings: "In the narrative of the General Assembly for 1831 mention is made of three- or four-day meetings as having been instrumental in promoting revivals. Respecting the origin of these meetings the writer is not informed. They did not originate in Western New York, but were adopted as means supposed to be calculated to be useful, and in accordance with divine institutions. They were meetings of a congregation, with individuals from neighboring congregations, for continued religious exercises

during a period of three or four days, from which circumstances they derived their appellation. The pastor of the church in which the meeting was held usually invited two or three of the neighboring pastors, or officiating ministers, to aid him in the conduct of the meeting. The pastor, in his instructions, would call the attention of the church and the congregation to the contemplated meeting; the object to be attained by it, or to be sought through its instrumentality; the preparation of heart necessary to seek God, acceptably; and the necessity of divine aid to realize any beneficial results. The members of the congregation would endeavor to order their temporal affairs in such a manner as to enable them to devote their time to an attendance on the meeting, without the distraction of other cares. Sometimes the appointment of the meeting was the result of a state of awakened attention already commenced in the congregation. During the period of the meeting preaching was attended, ordinarily twice, and sometimes three times each day, the ministers alternating in this exercise. Meetings for prayer and exhortation were attended in the morning, previous to the exercise of preaching, sometimes at the rising of the sun and again at nine o'clock. Another meeting of the same description was usually attended in the evening. At these meetings the ministers, elders and brethren took part in the service. In some instances, it was practiced to invite the anxious to a seat by themselves for the purpose of a short session of personal conversation with them individually."

Mr. Finney began his marvelous work in western New York immediately after his conversion. Wherever he went his sermons and his personal efforts made such impressions that he was encouraged to continue his services for extended periods. These meetings were called "Protracted Meetings." If Mr. Finney did not originate the protracted-meeting idea, he at least accelerated the movement. The Presbytery of Ontario, in 1832, reported: "Many of our churches during the past year have held protracted meetings for religious worship, which have been uniformly blessed to the conversion of sinners and to the edification of God's people."

The General Assembly in 1832 recognized the importance of the "Protracted Meeting": "Upon another subject of deep interest, there is a general unbroken testimony from all parts of the church, which have been blessed with a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We refer to the rich and precious blessings which have attended the numerous protracted meetings which have been held throughout our borders. Whatever honest difference of opinion there may have been as to the utility of such convocations; whatever fears may have been cherished as to their tendency, the question now seems decided that the Lord has signally owned and blessed them, and that the seal of divine approbation is visibly and indelibly fixed upon them" (Hotchkin, *History of Western New York*, pp. 166, 167).

Thus the Baptist Covenant Meeting prior to the communion service and the three-day preparatory

meetings of the Presbyterians grew into the "Four-day Meeting," the "Protracted Meeting" and the "Revival Meeting." When these precommunion services were real, sinners were converted. It was, therefore, natural that the idea should be developed and the period lengthened. This necessitated its separation from the communion service. It also led to the use of the revival preacher or evangelist, with special gifts for conducting these meetings.

The Rise of the Revivalist or Evangelist

The vocational or professional evangelist arose as an essential adjunct to the revival or protracted meetings. Asahel Nettleton, in the second, third and fourth decades, and Charles G. Finney, in the third, fourth and fifth decades, were the leading pioneers of this movement.

Although Nettleton was a travelling evangelist, he was reluctant to advocate an order of evangelists, as assistants to the pastors. His biographer writes: "He remembered what he had learned concerning the operations of Davenport and their results; also the false zeal, and improper spirit manifested by certain itinerants with whom he became acquainted when he began to preach; and, in addition to these things he found that certain zealous young men were coming forward every year as evangelists, who by rashness and imprudence, were doing injury to the cause of religion. These things convinced him, that if this description of laborers were systematically employed, more evil than good might confidently be expected as the result."

“He has often been heard to say, that a few men might be very usefully employed as evangelists, if we could be sure of obtaining men of the right character—men of distinction, who would co-operate with the settled pastors, and aid them in putting down irregularities, and promoting order. But, believing that most who engage in this service, would be men of a different character, he discouraged the idea of bringing forward and supporting an order of such laborers.” He declined the offer of the General Association of Connecticut, in 1820, to be their evangelist. He refused to be supported in that way, thus establishing “a precedent for a new order in the church.” Other leaders agreed with him (Tyler, *Memoirs of Nettleton*, p. 69).

The ministry of evangelists is noted in the *Narrative of Revivals* in Geneva Presbytery, written in 1831: “The labor generally has been performed by the pastor and stated ministers, assisted in prayer meetings and parochial visiting by the leaders and other members of the church. The young converts also have exerted an important influence, by personal conversation and in meetings for social prayer. In some instances the labor of itinerants was employed, but with few exceptions, with no very obvious success.”

Hotchkin relates the rise of the evangelists to the protracted meetings: “The employment of evangelists or ministers without pastoral charge, to labor in protracted meetings, and take the lead in the conduct of them, was commenced simultaneously with the introduction of those meetings. These

preachers were supposed to possess extraordinary talents to collect and interest a congregation, to awaken sinners and to excite Christians to engagedness and activity in the Lord's service. Some of them were believed to be men of extraordinary piety, living peculiarly near to God, and by their strength of faith in prayer, prevailing with God.

"The manner of address would, of course, vary according to the peculiar temperament of the preacher. Generally, however, it partook largely of the severe character, and very commonly if it failed to subdue, produced a deep disgust. Gentleness was not the characteristic trait of but few, if any, of this order of preachers. Undoubtedly, some of them supposed that the peculiar state of the times required severity in those who would be faithful as ministers of Christ. . . . Hence, they abounded more in assertions, than proofs, and made positive declarations rather than dispassionate argumentation. . . . In those cases where an evangelist was employed in conducting a protracted meeting, it was generally with the understanding that he was to have the sole direction of the meeting, and to perform all the preaching.

"Some of them were well educated, sound in doctrine, and highly useful as preachers of the Gospel. But many of them were destitute of classical and theological furniture; of feeble natural abilities; erroneous in sentiments; boisterous, vulgar, and abusive in their manner of preaching; irreverent and even dictatorial in prayer, and fanatical in their whole procedure. Their operations and in-

fluence were destructive in a high degree, and brought discredit on the revivals. It is not, however, to be understood, that this class of evangelists were generally countenanced and upheld by the ministers and churches of the Presbyterian denomination in Western New York. Many of them had no connection with any Presbytery. Hence, the ecclesiastical judicatories could do nothing more than warn their churches not to employ them" (Hotchkin, *History of Western New York*, pp. 167, 168, 172, 174, 175).

At the opening of the fifth decade there was growing mixture of these good and harmful elements. There were "most glorious outpouring of the Holy Spirit" in many places. On the other hand, "the revivals in many places have been of a less pure character than those of preceding years, and many professed converts have been introduced into the churches who give no evidence of piety, some of whom have long since been cut off by the process of discipline, and others hang upon the church a dead weight, crippling its energies, marring its beauty, and affording an occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme."

The Finney Innovations

In the third decade of the nineteenth century there were great revivals in central New York State. Charles G. Finney at this time was at the height of his career. A contemporary said of him: "His manner and severity appear to some to verge upon rashness and denunciations, pungency assumed

at times the guise of personality, agonizing earnestness in prayers was scarcely discernible in some instances from irreverent familiarity." Nettleton was old and broken; Mr. Finney was young and robust. "The style of one was subdued. Of the other all *eclat*. Both were original; both had their eccentricities, but their eccentricities were of opposite kinds. Nettleton resembled, in the conduct of a revival, a skillful performer playing with exquisite touch upon some delicate instrument. After his health was broken, however, there was a tightening of those tendencies to a species of fastidiousness peculiarly quaint and remarkable. If we might presume to illustrate the difference of the two men in their style of labor by a comparison, we should say that the latter (Nettleton) laid snares for sinners, the former rode them down in a cavalry charge, the one, being crafty, took them by guile; the other, being violent, took them by force."

They accused Finney of prolonging meetings to unusual hours, sometimes throughout the night; that his followers prayed for people and encouraged others to do so by name in the public meetings, and that he did not discourage women from speaking and praying in public assemblies. These were called "The Finney Innovations." Tyler refers to these innovations: "In the year 1826 there was a great religious excitement in the central and western parts of the state of New York, occasioned principally by the labors of the Rev. Chas. G. Finney, an evangelist of great zeal, and of considerable native eloquence. Connected with this excitement,

various measures were introduced, similar to those, which, in former times had been the great instruments of marring the purity of revivals and promoting fanaticism; such as praying for persons by name, using great familiarity in prayer, encouraging females to pray and exhort in promiscuous assemblies, calling upon persons to come to the anxious seat, or to rise up in the public assembly to signify that they had given their hearts to God, or had made up their mind to attend to religion. The result was that where this spirit prevailed and these measures were introduced, there were divisions in the churches'' (Tyler, *Memoirs of Nettleton*, pp. 245, 246). Nettleton never became reconciled to the use of "the new measures."

Vedder tells of the opposition to these Finney innovations: "In one of his meetings where he had been preaching about three hours, Mr. Finney attempted to bring people to decision in the matter of their salvation, by requesting them to rise if they desired to accept Christ, and a few years later, in 1828, on a single occasion, he asked those who desired to be saved to come forward to the front seat while the rest of the congregation prayed for and with them. It was not until his meeting in Rochester that he made much use of either device, but from this time onward, the inviting of sinners forward became usual with him. This was known as 'Coming forward to the anxious seat,' and Mr. Finney's use of this method was severely criticized.

"Finney was a lawyer pleading for a verdict. During the first revival at Rochester, he used "the

anxious seat" as a method to help inquirers. Its purpose was to bring the unconverted to immediate decision and also commit themselves publicly to Christ. For six years he was feeling his way toward this as he was convinced of its need. Hereafter it was almost his universal custom to use it in his meetings.

"The objection to this method was largely theological. Old-school Calvinists were loath to allow that the human will had any determining power. To them conversion followed regeneration; a mysterious process wrought by the Holy Spirit. They believed in using the means of grace and then waiting until it was the Lord's good pleasure to renew the sinners.

"Mr. Finney, on the other hand, assumed that the sinner had sufficient power of self-determination to accept the divine promise of salvation at any time and that nothing but his own wicked perversity stood in the way of his immediate salvation. Consequently in all his preaching he attempted above all things to sweep away every excuse that men had for their inaction and strove by every means in his power to bring them to an immediate decision for Christ" (Vedder, *History of Baptists in Middle States*, p. 153).

Finney's enemies went to great extremes in their opposition. A pamphlet was published against him in which they accused the Presbyterians of plotting to establish a national church. The following false description was given of his "anxious meetings," which was the special object of their

attack: "The next step in course, in these revivals, is to establish what are termed anxious meetings. They are generally, if not always, held in the night. The room is darkened, so that persons can only see to walk and discover each other; and the reign of universal silence is interrupted only now and then by a dolorous groan from different parts of the room. The leader or leaders tread softly about, as they proceed, whispering to each individual some question or questions, such as 'Do you love God?' etc. . . . In a circle of the anxious, Mr. Finney would go round, and by putting his eyes on each individual for a few minutes, tell the exact state of their mind; and would congratulate one and another with their new hope, even though they were strangers."

They claimed that Mr. Finney professed he could see the faces of converts in the dark, and that he could tell their exact state. They accused him of collecting vast sums of money, etc. Finney was reported also as laboring in parishes even against the pastors' wishes.

Nettleton first heard these reports when he was laboring in Jamaica, Long Island. At once he classed these "new measures" with the fanatical innovations which followed the Great Awakening, a century before, when Davenport and his associates had made havoc with the churches. Nettleton became militant. He had many able supporters, such as Dr. Griffin, Dr. E. Porter, Dr. Lyman Beecher, Dr. Heman Humphrey, Dr. Joel Hawes and Dr. Gardiner Spring. Some of these afterwards be-

came the firm supporters of Finney and his work. They launched a persistent warfare against what they called "the new measures." Nettleton's *Letter to Lyman Beecher* was printed, as was Finney's sermon on "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" The Oneida Presbytery published a pamphlet in defense of the Finney revival. Lyman Beecher expressed his opposition: "Finney, I know your plan, and you know I do; you mean to come to Connecticut, and carry a streak of fire to Boston. But if you attempt it, as the Lord liveth, I'll meet you at the State line, and call out all the Artillery men and fight every inch of the way to Boston, and then I'll fight you there" (*Autobiography of Lyman Beecher*, Vol. I., p. 101). (See Finney's Autobiography, p. 101.)

The Revival Convention

Finally a revival convention was called at New Lebanon, N. Y., in July, 1827. A series of resolutions were proposed denouncing certain harmful measures. Finney was present. In view of the fact that he had never used such measures, he asked Dr. Beecher the intent of the motion. When Dr. Beecher assured him it was prospective and calculated to guard against future abuses, Finney approved the resolution.

The following two extracts from the resolutions show the common ground upon which these opponents in revival work stood:

"There may be so much human infirmity, and indiscretion, and wickedness of men, in conducting a revival of religion, as to render the general evils

which flow from this infirmity, indiscretion, and wickedness, greater than the local and temporary advantages of the revival; that is, this infirmity, indiscretion, and wickedness of man may be the means of preventing the conversion of more souls than there may have been converted during the revival."

"The existence in the church of Evangelists, in such numbers so as to constitute an influence in the community, separate from that of the settled pastors; and the introduction, by evangelists, of measures, without consulting the pastors, or contrary to their judgment and wishes, by the excitement of popular feeling which may seem to render acquiescence unavoidable, or at least liable to destroy the institution of a settled ministry, and fill the churches with confusion and disorder."

The convention united in prayer. The vote was then taken and all declared in favor of it. The editor of Finney's autobiography adds a note concerning this revival convention: "A careful perusal of the minutes of this convention has satisfied us that there was no radical difference of views between the western brethren and those from New England."

Nettleton held his own ideas regarding Finney until his death. Beecher speaks of "his infirmity of never giving up his own will." Following this convention, many of Finney's opponents became his warmest friends. They invited him to their churches and their cities. This convention brought Finney into great prominence. He entered upon

the national and international phases of his illustrious career.

Revival Associations in the Seminaries

It was believed then that "to cherish the spirit of revivals in our theological seminaries is the direct way of multiplying revival ministers." A Revival Association was organized at Andover Seminary for the purpose of collecting information on the subject of revivals. Ebenezer Porter's *Letters on Revivals* were written for this revival organization. In the first of these letters to the Revival Association, he stresses the importance of revivals of religion. "I consider the evidence too that the Gospel with all its motives to holiness is itself inadequate, without special divine influence upon the heart to subdue this hostility of the sinner; I see the cause of human salvation to be altogether desperate without the interposition of the Holy Spirit. The hope of the church then is in revivals of religion—continued, powerful general revivals."

Promotional Evangelistic Literature

Edwards in his day saw the value of publishing literature to promote revivals. His own works on the subject have never ceased to exert their influence. At his suggestion, Thomas Prince published *The Christian History* to report the progress of the gospel and to kindle revival fires. It was America's first magazine.

Much was published on The Great Revival in such periodicals as the *New York Missionary Mag-*

azine, etc. Three outstanding works appeared: Porter's *Letters on Revivals*, Sprague's *Lectures on Revivals*, and Finney's *Revival Lectures*.

Porter's Letters on Revivals

The Andover Theological Seminary published in 1832 the messages on revivals brought to them by Dr. E. Porter. They were called *Letters on Revivals*. In the first letter he tells of the revivals which followed the Great Awakening of 1740. With this historical sketch as a background, he discusses the means employed to promote these revivals and the things which hindered their prosperity. The following themes were treated by Dr. Porter: "Means employed to promote revivals; hindrances to their prosperity; exercises of sinners under legal treatment; exercises of hopeful converts; treatment by ministers and Christians of those who entertain hopes; general results; the influence on ministers and on churches."

Sprague's Revival Lectures

William B. Sprague, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Albany, delivered a series of lectures on revivals in the autumn and winter of 1831 and 1832. He stated his object: "The grand object has been to vindicate and advance the cause of genuine revivals of religion; and, in doing this, to distinguish between a genuine revival and a spurious excitement; to defend revivals against the cavils of their opposers; to show the causes which operate to prevent or retard them; to exhibit the

agency of God, and the instrumentality of men, by which they are produced and sustained to guide the inquiring of men, by which they are produced and sustained; to guide the inquiring sinner and establish the young convert; to guard against the abuses to which revivals are liable, and to anticipate the glorious results to which they must lead.”

The first edition of these lectures was published in 1832. The printed volume contained an appendix which is its most valuable contribution to evangelistic literature. Dr. Sprague had solicited a statement from a number of the most distinguished clergymen of our country, representing six different religious denominations. The object of the request was twofold. “First, to obtain authentic history of our revivals in which unhappily we have hitherto been greatly deficient; and, second, to ascertain the manner in which revivals have been conducted by men whose wisdom, experience and standing in the church must at least entitle their opinion to great consideration.” The letters from these leaders covered the entire period of The Great Revival and its subsequent revival waves.

The correspondents who contributed to this volume included the outstanding college presidents and many of the greatest preachers of the early decades of the nineteenth century. This cloud of witnesses to the history, methods and messages of The Great Revival left their own and succeeding generations deeply indebted to them for a most valuable interpretation of that era of our church history at a time when revivals occupied the central place on

the stage of religious activities. A few quotations from these leaders show their wisdom:

Dr. Day, president of Yale, wrote: "The means which have been used in seasons of unusual religious attention, are such as are suggested by a deep conviction of the practical bearing of two essential principles; one that the conversion of sinners is effected through the instrumentality of truth, scriptural truth; the other, that no exhibition of the truth will be effectual without the special agency of the Holy Spirit."

Dr. Milledoler, president of Rutgers, wrote: "The phrase 'Revived of Religion' has respect to two sorts of persons: (1) To those who are awakened from a state of spiritual death to a state of spiritual life; and (2) To those who being thus awakened are reanimated after seasons of depression, by a renewed and divine unction or impulse. Both these operations are recognized in the sacred scriptures, and both are attributed to the Holy Spirit. Hence those who are born again are said to be born of the Spirit; and times of reviving or refreshing are everywhere attributed to him as their undoubted author."

Dr. Davis, president of Hamilton College, wrote: "We are living in an age of peculiar character, marked by a restless spirit of bold and daring enterprise, and, an eagerness for discovery and invention which is reckless of consequences. There is a prevailing and strong propensity to adopt what is new, because it is new; to stop our ears to the voice of experience and the dictates of common

sense, and to turn aside from the good old paths in which our fathers have walked. . . . Never are ministers and private Christians more in danger of overlooking the plain and unerring declaration of God's word; and in their zeal for the salvation of the soul, of acting on the principle, that 'if it is only saved, it is no matter by what means it is saved'."

Dr. Nathan Lord, president of Dartmouth College, speaking of five revivals, in 1815, 1819, 1821, 1826 and 1830, wrote: "In every instance they seemed the product of the Spirit's influence; silently affecting different minds with the same truths, and multiplying the trophies of Divine mercy. They were an effect and not a cause of divine interposition; and except as occasionally blemished through human weakness and sinfulness, bore the characteristics of the wisdom which is from above. We have no machinery for making converts and would allow none to be introduced."

Dr. McNeill, president of Dickinson College, wrote: "Disapproving of all means and measures, intended to advance the cause of religion, which are not sanctioned by the example of Christ and the Apostles, or are not warranted by the discipline of God's house, as laid down in his Holy Bible. In judging then I do not impugn the motives, or undervalue the zeal and labors of those brethren in the ministry who employ expedients in their efforts to bring sinners to Christ, which I deem unwarranted. . . . Human devices, however, ingenious and well-meant will in the long run, be found

fraught with mischief to the truth; and to that decency and order which Christ has established in his kingdom.”

Dr. McIlvaine, rector of St. Anne's, Brooklyn, N. Y., wrote concerning the two great constituents of a revival: “One of these is the conversion of sinners. But it is not the only object; though too much treated as though it were. The other is the quickening of the people of God to a spirit and walk becoming the Gospel.” As to the means, he wrote: “The faithful, plain, direct preaching the truth is one of these means . . .; combined and earnest prayer is another of the means of obtaining a revival; some legitimate, sober effort to create a general disposition to attend to the word, is very important. . . .”

“Great scandal has been raised by indiscretion and what I can not call by any lighter name than fraud on the part of some seekers of a revival. The agency of the Holy Spirit as the beginning and the ending has been almost or entirely set aside. A revival has been represented and sought for as an article of manufacture for which you have only to set the machinery and raise the steam of excitement, caring little with what fuel, and converts will be made to hand. . . . Whatever I possess of religion began in a revival. The most precious, steadfast and vigorous friends of my ministry have been the fruits of revivals. I believe that the spirit of revivals, in the true sense, was the simple spirit of the religion of the Apostolic times and will be more and more the characteris-

tics of these times, as the day of the Lord draws near.”

Dr. Humphrey, president of Amherst, wrote: “The Sword of the Spirit has been the great method—there is none like it. . . . Calling anxious sinners unto the aisles to be addressed and prayed for, has not been practical within the circle of my observations, nor have they been requested before the great congregation to come forward from every part of the house, and occupy seats vacated for that purpose. Wherever such measures have been adopted within my knowledge, I believe the cause of revivals has lost more than it has gained by them. It is unsafe to argue from the present effect of the new system that it is better than the old. It may accomplish more in a week but not so much in a year. It may bring a greater number unto the visible kingdom of Christ; but not so many unto his spiritual Kingdom.”

Dr. Wayland, president of Brown University, wrote: “Most frequently Christians become convinced of their lukewarmness, and return to God by repentance, and through them the Holy Spirit is shed abroad upon the unconverted.” Concerning the means used, he adds: “On the part of the church, the putting away of all known sin, the enforcement of strict discipline, the universal engagement in behalf of temperance, the renewal of covenant engagements with God, more universal separation from the world, have all been frequently followed by seasons of revival. Setting apart seasons of fasting and prayer, and humiliation, both

individually and collectively, have very commonly been attended with a blessing. The more frequent and faithful preaching of the Gospel has generally been followed by increase of religious attention in a congregation."

Dr. Griffin, president of Williams College, wrote: "It is much easier to enter into the excitement of a protracted meeting than to tug at the oar of prayer in secret, or even exercise a holy heart; it is so much easier to move the people by these impassioned forms than to bring down the Holy Ghost by the struggles of faith; that there is the utmost danger that these meetings will be put in the room of secret prayer and of the Holy Ghost and even of personal religion. When I see them relied on to produce revivals without previous prayer, and a boast made that Christians were stupid when they began; when I see a revival of ten days produce its hundred converts; and the people who were stupid before relapse into the same stupidity at the ending of the protracted meeting, I can not but say, how different are these from the revivals of the past forty years, which were preceded by long agonies of desire and prayer, and which transmitted their spirit to many succeeding months."

Dr. Samuel Miller, professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government at Princeton, wrote: "The pious and devoted Mr. Baxter somewhere remarks: 'The Word of God is divine; but our mode of dispensing it is human; and there is scarcely anything we have the handling of, but we leave on it the prints of our fingers' . . . and thus created

unsightly spots on 'a blaze of glory.' . . . When, therefore, any are tempted to doubt the reality or the importance of what are called by intelligent Christians, revivals of religion, because they have often been tarnished by unhappy admixtures or accompaniments; they adopt a conclusion which does as little credit to their historical reading, as it does to their Christian experience. The work of the Holy Spirit in renovating and sanctifying the heart is the glory and hope of the church. That there should be seasons in which this work is made to appear with peculiar luster and power, so entirely falls in with all the work and ways of God, that the only wonder is that any one who reads the New Testament, or looks abroad on the face of Christian societies, should cherish a remaining doubt. And although the Spirit is a divine person, and all his influences infinitely pure and holy; yet when we recollect that its subjects are sinful men . . . we certainly can not wonder, that the sad marks of our weakness and fallibility should appear in our most precious seasons and in our holiest services."

Finney's Revival Lectures

Finney believed he was Spirit-led in writing his *Lectures on Revivals*. His health had broken down, and apparently there was no one else to do his work. He had taken a sea voyage to regain his health. The thought of the work ceasing, which he had begun, so overpowered him that he spent a day in prayer in his stateroom. "It was the

spirit of prayer that was upon me. I besought the Lord to go on with his work. After a day of wrestling and agony, the subject cleared. The Spirit led me to believe that the Lord would go forward with his work and give me strength to take any part in it he desired."

On returning to New York, his health was too broken to undertake evangelistic meetings. He gave a course of *Lectures on Revivals* to his church, the Broadway Tabernacle. This resulted first of all in a revival in his own church. The publication of the revival lectures in the *New York Evangelist*, and later in book form, produced revivals in many places throughout the country. One publisher in England alone sold eighty thousand volumes of the *Revival Lectures*, and great blessings resulted. They were translated into Welsh, and a revival sprang up in Wales. They were extensively circulated in Europe, and produced revivals in England, Scotland, on the Continent, in the Colonies, and in some of the islands of the sea. Finney defines a revival as follows: "A revival is a purely philosophical result of the right use of constituted means. It is not a miracle, nor dependent upon a miracle. There has long been an idea prevalent that promoting religion has something very peculiar in it, not to be judged by the ordinary rules of cause and effect. No doctrine is more dangerous than this to the prosperity of the church. Suppose a man were to go and preach this doctrine among farmers, about their sowing grain. Let him tell that God is a sovereign and will give them a

crop only when it pleases him, and that for them to plough, and plant, and labor, as if they expected to raise a crop, is very wrong, and taking the work out of the hands of God. And suppose the farmers should believe such doctrine. Why, they would starve the world to death. Just such results would follow the churches' being persuaded that promoting religion is somehow so mysterious a subject of Divine sovereignty, that there is no natural connection between the means and the end. I fully believe, that could facts be known, it would be found that when the appointed means have been rightly used, spiritual blessings have been obtained with greater uniformity than temporal ones.

“A revival consists in the return of the church from her backslidings, and in the conversion of sinners. A revival always includes conviction of sin on the part of the church. It is nothing else than a new beginning of obedience to God. Christians will have their faith renewed. They will be filled with a tender and burning love for souls. A revival breaks the power of the world and of sin over Christians. When the churches are thus awakened and reformed, the salvation of sinners will follow going through the same stages of conviction, repentance and reformation.”

Chapter XI.

ABIDING RESULTS OF THE GREAT REVIVAL

THE Great Revival of 1800 was the most far-reaching in its results of all the revivals which have come to the churches in America. Leonard Bacon writes: "The widespread revivals of the first decades of the nineteenth century saved the church in America from its low estate and girded it for stupendous tasks that were about to be devolved on it. In the glow of this renewed fervor, the churches of New England successfully made the difficult transition from establishment to self-support and to the costly enterprises of aggressive evangelization into which, in company with other churches to the South and West, they were about to enter. The Christianity of the country was prepared and equipped to attend with equal pace the prodigious rush of population across the breadth of the Great Valley, and to give welcome to the invading host of immigrants, which, before the end of a half century, was to effect its entrance into our territory at the rate of a thousand a day. It was to accommodate itself to changing social conditions as the once agricultural population began to concentrate itself in factory villages and commercial towns. It was to carry on systematic campaigns against instituted social wrong, such as the drinking usages of society, the savage code of duel-

ling and the public sanction of slavery. And it was to enter the "effectual door" which from the beginning of the century opened wider and wider to admit the Gospel and the church to every nation under heaven" (Bacon, *History of American Christianity*).

Good Results in American Colleges

The colleges of our country were reclaimed from infidelity. They became the training places for leaders who went forth to old and new settlements to build a Christian civilization. Beardsley writes: "Dwight's masterful and discriminating survey of the philosophy of unbelief and complete refutation of the same were followed in 1802 by powerful and far-reaching revivals. In consequences of which the colleges of this country have never ceased to be centres of Christian influence, whence have flowed streams of living waters to quicken and refresh the world" (Beardsley, *History of American Revivals*).

Bishop Hurst writes: "From the day that the young President faced his students at Yale, in the chapel of Yale College, infidelity has been a vanishing force in the history of the American people."

The Great Revival was the savior of the Western territories. Bishop Candler writes: "It is not claimed for the revival of 1800 that it accomplished all that was necessary for the evangelization of the West at the moment, or that it finally assured the security of that region through all the

years which have followed. But it averted the most serious and menacing evils of that period and set in motion influences and enterprises which have never ceased to operate on behalf of the Christian civilization of the West, as the frontiers of the republic have moved steadily toward the Pacific and as wave after wave of immigration has followed the ever-moving boundaries of the nation. Without it the West would have been lost to the Union, and, but for the effects of the revival which remain to this day, the West would not be secure now. No adequate history of the Northwest can omit or minimize this factor in its development. . . . Aaron Burr would have worked out his schemes for the disintegration and dismemberment of the West. But by the revival, forces of national unity were created, which operated to the saving of the nation then and to its progress at a later time. . . . The Great Revival of 1800 was the *menstrum* by which dissimilar and antagonistic elements were made to run together as a sound composite. It carried the nation safely through the period of the disestablishment of all churches, a transition made easy by The Great Revival of 1800'' (Candler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic*, pp. 187, 188).

In the West, where there were greater manifestations of the physical accidentals and extravagances, some have doubted the permanent value of The Great Revival to church life. Fowler, in *The American Pulpit*, wrote: "In conclusion, let us adopt the testimony of those many witnesses who now old, wise and godly men, and having for

fifty-five years watched, with religious fidelity, the results of the great revival, assure us that the good fruits are incalculable, in comparison with which its evil sinks into insignificance."

The Triumphant Church

Paine declared he would show the world that what it took the Christian church eighteen centuries to build up, he would tear down in a single generation. Did the infidel boast come true? Did the church perish in this period? This was not the case. In the period 1800 to 1830, the Presbyterian Church increased from 40,000 to 173,329, or fourfold. The Congregational Church increased from 75,000 to 140,000, or twofold. The Baptist Church increased from 100,000 to 313,138, or threefold. The Methodist Church from 64,000 to 476,153, or sevenfold. Dorchester writes: "Nothing like such an increase had ever before been known, though it has since been paralleled and even exceeded for the new revival era has continued to our time." By 1850, the Presbyterians grew to 487,691, the Congregationalists to 197,197, the Baptists to 815,212, and the Methodists to 1,323,631 members. In 1800 there was one church to 1,751, one minister to 2,001, and one communicant to 14.50 inhabitants. In 1850 there was one church to 538, one minister to 900, and one communicant to 6.57 inhabitants. The Great Revival preserved and multiplied the churches.

Methodists in the West grew from 2,700 to over 10,000 in five years. This growth brought their

doctrine and discipline prominently to the forefront.

On the whole, the Presbyterians received a great impetus from this religious awakening, which was evidenced in numerical growth among their churches. In the West, however, where a sharp division broke their ranks, and where the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination emerged, they reported a numerical loss.

The Elkhorn Baptist Association in Kentucky, when The Great Revival was at its height, added ten new churches to its list and reported 3,011 Baptists in a single year. Four churches reported between three and four hundred baptisms; others reported between one and two hundred; many others reported between twenty and thirty baptisms. An historian writes concerning the other associations and their growth: "I am most creditably informed that upwards of 10,000 at the lowest calculation had been baptized in one year. Surely this must be the work of God."

Benedict writes of its unifying influence: "It caused changes in the tone and efforts of the Baptists and resulted in an enlargement of their boundaries. The differences between the Regular and Separate Baptists were adjusted and the Revival left the church united." The Great Revival made the Baptists a major influence in our country.

The Baptists in New York State had 4,001 members in 1790. They grew to 12,000 in 1800, and 18,499 in 1812. They had 60,000 members in 1832, and 97,602 in 1843.

New York Baptists opened the nineteenth century with ninety-four churches grouped in four associations. By 1810 they had added eighty-three churches and five associations. Ninety-six churches and seven associations were added by 1820. In 1843 they numbered 803 churches.

Vedder, the Baptist historian, relates this growth to "the impulse received by the church, in common with all other American Christians, from the great spiritual movement that marked the close of the eighteenth century."

Origin and Growth of the Disciples of Christ

One of the greatest single permanent results of The Great Revival was the development of the people commonly known as the Disciples of Christ.

Early in the period, when men were beginning to break through formalism, sectarianism and misty theology, there appeared in widely scattered areas men who determined to abide by the Bible, and the Bible alone, as their rule of faith and practice. In many cases this necessitated a break with existing denominational authority. In North Carolina, James O'Kelley (Methodist) broke with his conference on Christmas Day, 1793, at Manakin Town, announcing that he and his followers favored the congregational polity and the New Testament as the only book of discipline. At first they were known as "Republican Methodists," but later adopted the name "Christian." In Connecticut, Dr. Abner Jones (Baptist) followed suit, and during the years 1800-1803 established congrega-

tions in New Hampshire and Vermont. Barton W. Stone (Presbyterian), who was so prominent in The Great Revival in Kentucky, believing that his ecclesiasticism was hindering the growth of true religion, advised the dissolution of the Springfield Presbytery and a return to the simple doctrine and polity of the New Testament. He led in the establishment of the so-called "Christian Connection." Thomas Campbell (Seceder Presbyterian), eager for a fuller Christian liberty and fraternity, was arraigned before his synod for failing to inculcate strict adherence to church standards. Withdrawing, he led in the establishment of "The Christian Association of Washington," Aug. 17, 1809. On Sept. 8, 1809, he issued, with the Association's approval, the "Declaration and Address," a document highly regarded even until now. Its chief thesis was that Christian unity could be achieved if the followers of Christ would abandon all human creeds, organizations and practices, and associate with one another on the simple basis of faith in and obedience to Christ as set forth in the Scriptures alone.

This remarkably spontaneous and widespread movement waited for a Moses. He came in the person of Alexander Campbell, son of Thomas Campbell, who arrived from Glasgow University just as his father was becoming the object of bitter persecution. One can get an idea of the qualities the younger Campbell possessed by the comments of his distinguished contemporaries in all walks of life.

President Madison said: "It was my pleasure to hear him very often as a preacher of the gospel, and I regard him as the ablest and most original expounder of the Holy Scriptures I have ever heard."

Dr. Heman Humphrey, president of Amherst College, said: "In listening to him you feel that you are in the presence of a great man. He speaks like a master of assemblies."

George D. Prentice, the brilliant editor of the *Louisville Journal*, said: "Alexander Campbell is unquestionably one of the most extraordinary men of our time. Putting wholly out of view his tenets, with which we, of course, have nothing to do, he claims, by virtue of his intrinsic qualities as manifested in his achievements, a place among the very foremost spirits of the age. His energy, self-reliance and self-fidelity, if we may use the expression, are of the stamp that belongs only to the world's first leaders in thought or action. His personal excellence is without a stain or a shadow. His intellect is among the cleanest, richest, profoundest ever vouchsafed to man. Indeed, it seems to us that in the faculty of abstract thinking, in the sphere of pure thought, he has few, if any, living rivals. . . . He grasps and handles the highest, subtlest, most comprehensive principles as if they were the liveliest impressions of the senses. No poet's soul is more crowded with imagery than his is with the ripest forms of thought. Surely the life of a man thus excellent and gifted is a part of the common treasure of society. In his essential

character he belongs to no sect or party, but to the world."

Robert E. Lee, the great leader of the Confederacy, said: "He was a man in whom were illustriously combined all the qualities that could adorn or elevate the nature to which he belonged; knowledge the most varied and extended, virtue that never loitered in her career nor deviated from her course. A man who, if he had been delegated as a representative of his species to one of the many superior worlds, would have suggested a grand idea of the human race."

Campbell's biographer, Dr. Richardson, says of his platform: "[He proposed that Christianity] begin anew . . . to ascend at once to the pure fountain of truth, and to neglect and disregard, as though they had never been, the decrees of popes, councils, synods and assemblies, and all traditions and corruptions of an apostate church. Here was an effort not so much for the *reformation* of the church, as was that of Luther and Calvin, but for its complete *restoration* at once to its pristine purity and perfection. By coming at once to the primitive model and rejecting all human imitations; by submitting implicitly to the Divine authority as plainly expressed in the Scriptures, and by disregarding all the assumptions and dictations of fallible men, it was proposed to form a union upon a basis to which no valid objection could be offered. By this summary method, the church was to be at once released from the controversies of eighteen centuries, and from the conflicting claims

of all pretenders to apostolic thrones, and the primitive gospel of salvation was to be disentangled and disembarrassed from all those corruptions and perversions which had heretofore delayed or arrested its progress" (Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*).

By sermon, debate, writing, teaching and indefatigable traveling up and down the land, Alexander Campbell and his associates spread this new movement until it became the marvel of the century. By 1835, according to *Niles Register* (issue July 2, 1836), it numbered 300,000 communicants. Today it has passed the 2,000,000 mark in America alone, ranking among the six leading Protestant communions and being the only one of distinctly American origin.

A chronicle of this religious movement would not be complete without mention of the historic incident which brought it and its brilliant leader so vividly to the attention of the country at large, and was such a determining factor in the final rout of atheism.

Robert Dale Owen, wealthy Englishman whose social and industrial experiments had caught the imagination of the youth of the world, came to America to advance his ideas. He boldly challenged the church as the chief obstacle of social progress, and avowed himself an absolute atheist. The religious leaders of the time were afraid to match wits with so brilliant an intellect, but finally Alexander Campbell stepped forward and took up the gauntlet.

“He published in the *Christian Baptist* a series of strong articles on ‘Robert Owen and the Social System’ and ‘Deism and the Social System,’ and they accomplished the desired results. In February, 1828, he was asked if he would meet Dr. Underhill in debate. He replied that he was always ready to defend his Master, but that he preferred not to meet a subordinate of Mr. Owen, but that gentleman himself. He would measure arms only with the king; and, as Mr. Owen was not averse, he did not have long to wait. Mr. Owen had been boldly flaunting his challenge in the face of the clergy for some time, but no one accepted it; but the moment it was seen by Mr. Campbell he accepted it, forwarding his acceptance to New Orleans, where Mr. Owen was lecturing.

“Just before the debate Mr. Owen visited Mr. Campbell at Bethany to arrange for the discussion, and one evening, when the two were strolling together over the farm, they came to the family burying ground, and Mr. Owen paused and said, ‘There is one advantage I have over the Christian—I am not afraid to die; and if some few items of my business were settled, I would be perfectly willing to die at any moment.’ Mr. Campbell replied, ‘You say you have no fear in death; have you any hope in death?’ After a solemn pause, Mr. Owen answered, ‘No.’ ‘Then,’ continued Mr. Campbell, pointing to an ox standing in the shade, whisking off the flies, ‘you are on the level with that brute. He has fed till he is satisfied, and there he stands in the shade, and has neither fear

nor hope in death.' Mr. Owen, unable to meet this simple, but crushing, reply, blushed in confusion and made no attempt to meet it.

"The debate took place in Cincinnati, O., Apr. 13-21, 1829, and it was a great occasion. Mr. Campbell was the acknowledged champion of the Christian faith, and Mr. Owen was no less distinguished as its foe; and the issue involved being the one great question of the world, it was one of the truly remarkable and important events in religious history.

"Mr. Campbell, being a philosopher, and realizing the importance of thorough work, gave to his defense of Christianity the widest possible range. On the fifth day Mr. Owen completed the reading of his manuscript, and, finding himself unable to follow his opponent in his broad generalizations and masterly summaries, he requested him to proceed without interruption to the close of his argument. Then followed a speech of twelve hours, 'which,' says Richardson, 'for cogency of argument, comprehensive reach of thought and eloquence, has never been surpassed, if ever equaled.' And when it closed, a thoughtful hearer, not in sympathy with Mr. Campbell, expressed the feelings of himself and most of the audience when he said, 'I have been listening to a man who seems as one who had been living in all ages.'

"Mr. Campbell, at the close, anxious that those who did not hear the debate should know the sentiment of those who did, asked all who believed in the Christian religion to rise, when it seemed

that every one rose. He then put the other side of the question, and three stood. Mr. Owen pleasantly remarked that 'it made him happy to see others happy.'

"The debate was a success in that it checked the rising tide of infidelity, and encouraged the friends of the Christ. It also greatly helped Mr. Campbell in his work by placing the religious world, both Protestant and Catholic, under lasting obligations to him, and by giving to him the prestige and power that come to a victorious leader in a crucial hour. It was published, and had a large sale; and it remains to this day an authority on Christian evidences" (Davis, *How the Disciples Began and Grew*, pp. 148-151).

Emerging Communions

Besides the Disciples of Christ, out of The Great Revival there emerged such religious communions as the Cumberland Presbyterian and the Christian Connection. It was at this time that Shakerism got a stronghold in the West. In the soil stirred up by The Great Revival, weeds as well as wheat appeared. Mormonism, Spiritualism and certain communistic movements arose. They were not a result or fruit of The Great Revival.

At the outset of the nineteenth century, a number of movements were waiting like ships in a harbor for a favorable wind to fill their sails. The period of religious depression had encouraged the enemies of God and of His church to believe they could win in their militant attempt to annihilate

the Christian church. God was back of the scenes. At the right moment He moved to stop the foe and advance His cause.

Missionary Supplanting Infidel Organizations

When atheism was defeated in the days of The Great Revival, God gave the world an antidote to counteract the poison which had been injected into our national life. In place of aggressive atheistical organizations, set for the pollution of the world, there emerged out of The Great Revival those great missionary movements of the Evangelical Churches of the United States which for over a century have contributed to the uplift and betterment of all the nations of the world.

Both the foreign missionary and the organized Sunday-school movements received their start and impetus in England in the Wesleyan and Evangelical revivals. In America, the War of the Revolution and the subsequent religious decline arrested all religious progress until The Great Revival started the church forward and gave birth to our great American missionary and benevolent movements.

The Missionary Society of Connecticut, constituted to Christianize the heathen in North America and to support and promote Christian knowledge in the new settlements within the United States, was organized in 1798. Its first missionary, David Bacon, commenced his labors in August, 1800, at a salary of "one hundred and ten cents per day." With only the baggage he could carry with him,

he "set out for the wilderness south and west of Lake Erie." This was the beginning of organized Home Mission societies in the American churches.

In rapid succession other missionary organizations came into existence. In 1798 the New York Missionary Society was organized by Baptists and Presbyterians; in 1799 the Northern Missionary Society of the State of New York and the Missionary Society of Massachusetts; in 1800 the Missionary Society of Hampshire, in Massachusetts; in 1801 the Missionary Society of New Jersey; in 1802 the Baptist Missionary Society of Massachusetts, and also the Western Missionary Society (Synod of Pittsburgh). The Great Revival also gave a mighty impetus to home-missions activities in the Western settlements.

These organizations were a prelude to the inauguration of the great foreign and home missionary societies of the major denominations in the United States. Mills, Nott, Rice, Newell, Hall, Judson and other great pioneers in organized missionary work, with scarcely an exception, were converts of The Great Revival.

In Williams College, newly organized in the Berkshires, there was a little group of students converted in The Great Revival, who were destined to inaugurate great foreign and home missionary activities, which have since revolutionized the Christian world. Samuel J. Mills, from Torrington, Conn., was their leader. "Around this student," writes Bacon, "gathered a circle of men like-minded. The shade of a lonely haystack was their

oratory; the pledges by which they bound themselves to a life work for the Kingdom of Heaven remind one of the mutual vows of the earliest friends of Loyola. Some of the youths went soon to the theological seminary, and at once leavened that community with their spirit."

Out of this grew the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, organized in 1810. For twenty-seven years it included the foreign mission work of the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians and the Dutch and German Reformed Churches. Judson, one of this immortal group, led the Baptists to organize their Foreign Missionary Society in 1814. The Methodists organized on similar lines in 1819.

Some of the foreign missionary societies undertook the evangelization of the Western settlements. The Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, at the first triennial meeting of the General Missionary Convention, was instructed to establish a Western mission. John Mason Peck was their first Western missionary. Dr. Jonathan Going visited Peck and the Western fields in 1831. As a result of this visit the American Baptist Home Mission Society was organized in 1832. Thus another missionary movement came into existence in the sweep of The Great Revival.

The Baptist Missionary Convention of the State of New York is another product of The Great Revival. The foundation of its 125 years of illustrious history was laid by revivalist pastors in the opening years of the nineteenth century. Since

then its greatest growth has come from great revivals. The pioneer members of this denomination, because of annoyances which they suffered under an intolerant state religion in New England, made the great adventure of penetrating into the wilds of central and western New York State with their message.

“One of these bands of immigrants,” writes Henry C. Vedder, “settled in 1795 at the headwaters of the Chenango, about one hundred miles west of Albany. One of the leading spirits among them was Samuel Payne, already a Baptist, and his brother Elisha, who accompanied him. The little clearing in the woods was first known as “Payne’s settlement,” and later as Hamilton. Religious meetings were held from the first in this community. These pioneers were soon joined by the Olmsteads, Pierces and Osgoods, men and women of like character and religious convictions” (Vedder, *History of Baptists in the Middle States*, p. 115).

A Baptist church was organized June 24, 1796. Five Baptist churches met in council on October 10 of the same year and recognized the Hamilton Church, which at that time had only twelve members. In 1797, at the third session of the Otsego Association, the Hamilton Church, with seven others, was admitted to its fellowship.

The history of the Missionary Convention of the State of New York, written by Peck and Lawton in 1837, lists six other Baptist churches as the only “lights” the Baptists had in a wide territory.

They were the Second Otsego (now Hartwick), the Otsego, the Fairfield-Palatine, the Norwick (now Berlin), the Schuyler and White Stone (now extinct), and the Charleston Church in Montgomery County. These churches were organized between 1793 and 1795.

Under a pastor named Price, a revival visited the Hamilton Church in 1798. It was the first of a goodly number of revivals which they enjoyed in the early decades of their history. Small, but revived, churches awaited the incoming immigrants to this new county. The Otsego Association grew in 1800 to thirty-seven churches, fifteen ministers and 1,164 members. By 1807 it had fifty-five churches with 3,265 members.

These Baptists were missionary. The West was to them what now is western New York. On Aug. 27, 1807, a committee met at the home of Elder Nathan Baker, in Pompey, Onandaga County, "to consider the propriety of forming a missionary society to evangelize the destitute parts of the State, especially in the west." This was called the "Lake Missionary Society." A second meeting was held October 28, in Hamilton, and officers were elected. Elder Ashbel Hosmer was elected president. Elder Salmon Morton was the first missionary to be commissioned. He was paid four dollars a week, and worked in the Holland Purchase. At the end of the first year the society reported a surplus of \$172.

The first missionaries of this convention were Peck, Bennett, Baker, Lawton, Hosmer and Upfold.

The Baptist State Convention absorbed the Hamilton Convention in 1824.

Rise of Theological Seminaries

Protestant theological seminaries grew out of The Great Revival. The Sulpitian Fathers had organized the first seminary for Catholics, at Baltimore, in 1791. The first Protestant seminary was organized at Andover in 1808. In 1805, the seating of Thomas Ware to the Hollis Chair of Theology at Harvard stirred the Evangelicals. Ware was a pronounced Unitarian. As a protest, Andover opened with a class of thirty-six students in 1808. Other seminaries followed rapidly. The Dutch Seminary was founded at New Brunswick in 1810; the Bangor Theological (Congregational) in 1816; the Hartwick (Lutheran) in 1816; the Episcopal General Seminary in 1819; the Baptist Hamilton Seminary in 1820; the Presbyterian Seminary in Auburn and the Seminary at Marysville, Tenn., 1821; Yale Divinity School in 1822; the Virginia Episcopal Seminary in 1823; the German Reformed at York, Pa., and the Union Theological Seminary in 1824; the Baptist Newton Seminary in 1825; the Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg in 1826, and the Baptist Seminary at Rock Spring, Ill., in 1827.

Religious Versus Atheistical Literature

Through The Great Revival, the religious press came into a position of national and world-wide influence. One of the printing establishments which

had been used to print infidel literature—a literature which boasted the coming downfall of Christianity—was converted and used to print copies of the Bible. The gates of hell did not prevail against the Christian church.

American Bible Society

Samuel Mills helped to bring the American Bible Society into existence. In 1815, with John F. Schermerhorn, he was sent to the West by the Massachusetts Missionary Society. They traveled from Pittsburgh, Pa., to New Orleans, La. They found great spiritual destitution and undertook to relieve it as far as they could by the distribution of the Bible. They made a graphic report. In the territory comprised by western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi, there were communities with from twenty to fifty thousand isolated without a church or preacher of any denomination. Here and there was a Baptist, rarely a Presbyterian. The Methodists marked out the territory into great circuits, to be visited by preachers about once a month. The sole competitors of the Methodists in this good work were the Baptists.

Numerous Bible societies arose in Great Britain and America at this time. The British Bible Society was organized in 1804. The first Bible Society in the United States was formed in Philadelphia in 1808, followed by similar societies in the States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and in the city of New York.

Mills' report so stirred the East that the Tract and Bible Societies united in sending him back loaded with tracts. Mills and Daniel Smith, in 1814, went out with 700 English Bibles, 500 New Testaments in French, 15,000 tracts and great bundles of sermons and pamphlets. On his return, Mills proposed a union of all Bible societies. Next year, on May 8, 1816, delegates from twenty-eight Bible societies met in New York City and organized the American Bible Society.

American Tract Society

Tract and Bible societies originated in England, in the great Wesleyan Revival. Mr. Wesley published books and tracts as early as 1749. The French infidels of Voltaire's day published pamphlets, and raised money to give them the widest circulation. To counteract this aggressive move on the part of organized infidelity, Christians in England organized the Religious Tract Society in 1799 and the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804.

American Christians followed their example. At first the work was of an individual and local character. In 1803, the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was organized. This was America's first Tract Society. Dr. Timothy Dwight organized the Connecticut Religious Tract Society in 1807. A number of other tract societies were organized in rapid succession. Most of these united and formed the American Tract Society, at a meeting held May 10, 1825, at the Brick Church in New York City.

Rise of Religious Periodicals

Religious periodicals emerged in this period. The *New York Missionary Magazine* and the *Depository of Religious Intelligence* were started in 1800. These were probably the first great religious periodicals coming as a result of The Great Revival. Others soon followed, including *The Boston Recorder* (Congregational) in 1816, *The Watchman* (Baptist) in 1819, *Zion's Herald* (Methodist) in 1822, the *Morning Star* (Free-will Baptist) in 1826, in 1823 the *Christian Baptist* (later *The Millennial Harbinger*) (Christian).

The Growing Sunday School

In the closing decades of the eighteenth century the atheists, led by Prof. Adam Weishaupt, proposed the communal education of children. Through this means the infidels hoped their cause would be accepted universally. The organized movement of the Sunday school came out of The Great Revival. It was the Almighty's antidote to infidelity's proposed mental and spiritual slaughter of the innocents. The Great Revival gave the Sunday school an impetus which it needed and which resulted in its nation-wide ministry.

Following the Revolutionary War, when church and state were separated, catechetical instruction in New England was largely abandoned. Bishop Asbury organized a Sunday school on the Robert Raikes plan in the house of Mr. Thomas Crenshaw, in Hanover County, Va. George Daughaday, a

Methodist minister, organized a Sunday school for African children in Charleston, S. C., in 1787. The first Sunday school in New York City was started in 1793, by Katy Ferguson, an African, for the neglected street children of her district. Mrs. Graham and her daughter (wife of Dr. Bethune) witnessed the good work of the Sunday school while traveling in England, and on their return to New York they organized three Sunday schools at their own expense, between 1801 and 1804. Mr. Collier, father of cotton manufacturing in America, assisted by Mr. Slater, started a Sunday school in a room of his factory, at Pawtucket, R. I., in 1797. Trumbull refers to a Sunday school established in Boston in 1791. There was a Sunday school at Stockbridge, N. Y., conducted by a sister of Samuel Occum, in 1793, and one in Paterson, N. J., in 1794. The schools of this period usually had paid teachers and were mostly for the children of the poorer and neglected classes. They used spelling-books, the hymnbook and the Bible.

Sunday-school unions were organized to advance the work. The first of these was organized in Philadelphia in 1791. It was the forerunner of the American Sunday School Union which was organized in 1824. The Evangelical Society was organized in 1809 in Philadelphia to promote "Sabbath evening schools with volunteer teachers." Mrs. Graham's labors led to a similar organization in New York City in 1814; namely, "The Female Union Society for the Promotion of Sabbath Schools." This was followed by the New York

Sunday Union in 1816. In its first year over 1,600 scholars were enrolled. By 1825 they had 58 schools, 616 conductors, 4,430 pupils. Boston organized, in 1816, "The Boston Society for the Moral and Religious Instruction of the Poor." Their first Sunday school was the Mason Street Sunday school, organized in 1817.

In 1817 "The Philadelphia Sunday and Adult Sunday School Union" was organized. Its employed missionaries organized sixty schools in different States in 1821. Soon there developed a desire for a Sunday-school union for the whole country. At a well-represented meeting of the Philadelphia Union, the American Sunday School Union was organized, May 25, 1824. The New York and Boston Unions became auxiliaries. Their object was "to concentrate the efforts of Sabbath school societies in different portions of the country to disseminate useful information, circulate moral and religious publications in every part of the land, and endeavor to plant a Sunday school wherever there is a population." The evangelizing work of this society in southern and western, in northwestern as well as in eastern States made the Sunday school the greatest evangelist of the church. The Sunday school maintains today this same important and coveted position.

Moral Progress

"All revivals are ethical revivals. They move, if they are authentic revivals sent from above, and not merely stimulated from below, not merely

in the realm of the emotions, but in the sphere of the conscience and the will. They leave behind them not merely joyful but changed lives. They make drunkards sober. They break the chains of evil habits, and implant a new set of emotions within the human heart. They arouse dormant faculties and inspire men to develop their natures, and by education and by self-discipline, and especially by prayer and spiritual exercises, enrich their lives" (Burns, *Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders*, p. 26).

Dr. Little, of Garret Biblical Institute, writes: "Great revivals pass beyond the realm of ethical convictions into the realm of the spiritual life—into the kingdom of regeneration—the only sure kingdom of permanent morality and ethical reality." Dr. Little goes on to show that there were so-called revivals which failed because of the lack of spiritual life, such as the Clunical Revival of the eleventh century. He speaks also of Arnold of Brescia, Abelard, Anselm and Bernard. "They contributed to theology and to political development. They did not preach the simple Gospel of God, the grace that redeems and the grace that transforms."

The same defect was also seen in the work of the penance preachers of Italy, the greatest of whom was Savonarola. "They lacked this mysterious permanent energy, the eternal life without which the loftiest ethics, even the ethics of Jesus Christ, are glittering, albeit celestial generalities. . . . Nothing is more pitiful than the attempt to

maintain by civil and ecclesiastical machinery a character of righteousness which can come only by living faith" (Little, in *The Revival, a Symposium*).

"The Wesleyan Revival in England and the Great Awakening in America changed moral conditions. Wesley organized the conscience and the rapture; he insisted strenuously upon 'the rules' of his societies, he led an ethical revival against every form of wickedness; he demanded a return to primitive Christianity and scriptural holiness" (*Ibid.*).

In the New World, Edwards also led an ethical revival. He writes of the good results of the awakening: "After a more than ordinary licentiousness in the people here, a concern for religion began to revive in the year 1729, but more obviously in the year 1733, when there was a general reformation of outward disorders which has continued ever since."

The Great Revival was not an exception in its ethical values. There came in the wake of The Great Revival a remarkable transformation of the moral life of the American people.

The Great Revival changed the whole moral condition of the Western settlements. In spite of many emotional extravagances, there was effected a great moral revolution. George A. Baxter wrote, on inquiry, to Archibald Alexander, of Princeton: "On my way I was informed by settlers on the road that the character of Kentucky was entirely changed, and that they were as remarkable for

sobriety as they had formerly been for dissoluteness and immorality, and indeed I found Kentucky was entirely changed, and that they were as remarkable for sobriety as they had formerly been for dissoluteness and immorality, and indeed I found Kentucky to appearances the most moral place I had ever seen." Donald Rice, in a sermon to the Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky, in 1803, said: "Neighborhoods noted for their vicious and profligate manners are now as much noted for their piety and good order. Drunkards, profane swearers, liars, quarrelsome persons, etc., are remarkably reformed."

The three outstanding evils at the opening of the nineteenth century were duelling, drunkenness and slavery. The Great Revival stimulated the church to attack these entrenched foes of the republic.

Duelling: The death of Alexander Hamilton in a duel in 1803 shocked the nation. Elaphalet Nott, John Mason Peck and Lyman Beecher led the agitation which culminated in Congress passing a law which disenfranchised a duelist.

Intemperance: The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1831 reported: "But especially from every Presbytery, where revivals exist, we learn that God is pleased to mark with special favor every well-directed effort to promote entire abstinence from ardent spirits." In The Great Revival there developed a growing movement against intemperance. Lyman Beecher, Heman Humphrey, Jeremiah Evarts and others made stir-

ring appeals against this national evil. As early as 1811, the Presbyterian General Assembly appointed a strong Temperance Committee. Other denominations did the same. A Total Abstinence Society was organized at Saratoga, N. Y., in 1820. The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance was organized in 1826. Elder Jacob Knapp, the Baptist evangelist, preached a powerful sermon, which led to the organization of the Washingtonian Society in 1840. The Great Revival produced the movement which gave us the 18th Amendment.

Slavery: During The Great Revival the national conscience was quickened against the enormous evils of human slavery. "The moral sense of the people, having been aroused, was offended at the presence of human slavery." Barton W. Stone, whose connection with the revival in Kentucky has been noted, emancipated his slaves during the revival. In 1818 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church gave its historic indictment of human slavery. Andover Seminary was the center of antislavery propaganda. Its students led many of the surrounding towns to make July 4, 1823, an antislavery holiday and celebration. Bacon dates "the Southern Apostasy" from 1833, when a Presbyterian minister, John Smylie, discovered "that the system of American slavery was sanctioned and proved by the Scriptures as good and righteous." Though opposed at first, his arguments in a few years dominated the South. The church was divided north and south on this question. The influence of The Great Revival finally won the day,

and slavery was banished from the United States of America.

Social and Economic Betterment

Social progress comes as the fruitage of saved men. Economic advances are always associated with great religious revivals.

The great discoveries of steam and electricity did not come as accidents of history. The Almighty God, against whom the sinister warfare of atheism had been waged, was the world's Creator and Sustainer. He called for the succeeding numbers on the program of an advancing civilization. In His divine wisdom He did not give all the contents of His bountiful storehouse at one time.

The treasure chests of gold and silver, of iron and copper and of coal were opened one by one. They came as providences of the Almighty, and not as achievements of the atheistical mind. It was not an accident that the great discoveries, which make for the comfort and convenience of humanity, came in the wake of The Great Revival.

Space forbids the enumeration of the many discoveries and inventions which have lifted the yoke of drudgery from the shoulders of our wives, mothers and daughters in our homes, and of our husbands, fathers and sons in the workshops and on the farms. We have seen distance conquered in space and sound. There is no denial that these great discoveries have been used by many, even by professing Christians, to exploit their fellow men. It does not nullify the Christian contention

that only the spiritual regeneration of the human heart will make men like Him who said, "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," and "I am among you as one that serveth." The hope of any age is not an anti-Christian atheism. It is an altruistic, Christlike movement. Love, not hate, is the law of progress. Roger Babson shows the remarkable relationship between revivals of religion and national prosperity from the days of Solomon to the present time.

Recently an atheist was addressing a crowd in a Moscow theater. Her speech had been preceded by an antireligious moving picture. The first part of the film portrayed the degrading acts of a perverted religious worship and its activities; the second part set forth the glorious achievements of the atheists. In this the tractor played the main role. At the conclusion of the picture the speaker described the achievements of atheism, blaming religious fanaticism for all national ills. In her discourse she mentioned steam engines, steamships, wireless apparatus, airplanes, but especially tractors, claiming that all these inventions were invented by people who did not believe in God. John Johnson, an American citizen, though Russian by birth, interrupted the speaker at this place:

"Please tell me, madam, from where you get your machinery, especially your tractors? Is it not from America? Please remember that America is a Christian country. Moreover, the inventions you speak of were not invented by atheists, but by believers in God."

The speaker could make no reply and speedily brought her atheistic, lying speech to a hurried conclusion (John Johnson, *Russia in the Grip of Bolshevism*, pp. 101, 102).

The period following The Great Revival was one of unprecedented national prosperity. Serious students of history do not separate the social fruitage from its essential spiritual roots. Christians may admit that they would like to see greater progress in economical and social betterment. However, when compared with the accomplishments of anti-Christian movements, a revived church still finds itself to be, in spite of its slow and often interrupted progress, the fastest train on the tracks.

Chapter XII.

THE ROAD TO REVIVAL IN OUR TIMES

THE Great Revival of the early nineteenth century speaks to the churches of the twentieth century. The church today faces situations not unlike those faced by the churches then, when revival was God's way out. Revival again is a national necessity. We do well to rethink revivals historically, theoretically and practically.

In every age of prosperity "good business" proved to be bad business for the church. Days of spiritual depression have challenged the church to pray for and promote revivals.

Our Age Prosperous and Pagan

Since the World War, America has enjoyed its greatest prosperity. With this prosperity there has come a great increase in our material comforts and our standards of living have been raised. Bernard Iddings Bell, in *Beyond Agnosticism*, describes this age: "Ours is a steam-heated, well-lighted, cunningly upholstered, warm-bathed era. With almost incredible ingenuity we ward off the bumps, plane the corners, 'escalate' the heights. From twilight-sleep birth to narcotized death we insist upon ease."

In such a time people are not concerned for "the sweet by-and-by." The sweet now-and-now

monopolizes their attention. Present comfort eclipses future salvation. Bunyan's pilgrim does not stir their imagination. They would rather improve living conditions in the City of Destruction than flee from it. The Celestial City is not on their itinerary. This prosperity cuts the prayer nerve of the church's life. A self-sufficient people have no inclination to seek assistance from without. If "prayer is the Christian's vital breath," we see a breathless church on every hand. How long can the church survive?

Our cultural resources have kept pace with our material prosperity. The scientific spirit has made the chief end of man to doubt everything and argue about it forever, instead of glorifying God and enjoying Him forever. The cross of Christ transcends human reason. The doctrine of eternal retribution is logical. We see the reasonableness of penalty following sin. The cross appeals to our emotions. "We love Him because He first loved us." The human reason can not fathom that love which led God to give His Son, and which led that Son to die on Calvary. The cross is foolishness to the intellectual Greek. It is, however, the power of God unto salvation to those who believe in Christ Jesus.

As in the days preceding The Great Revival, so now the church breathes a growing pagan atmosphere. Our material prosperity has acted like an opiate benumbing our spiritual sense. This loss of spiritual power makes ineffective the work of evangelizing agencies. The story of The Great Re-

vival of 1800 suggests the way back to power and blessing.

Dr. Luther A. Weigle, dean of Yale Divinity School, compares our present paganism with that which existed prior to The Great Revival. "The time in which we are now living is in some respects strangely like those closing years of the eighteenth century which I have described, when skepticism, atheism and infidelity were the vogue. We, too, have been at war; and war has been followed by extravagance and by an appalling prevalence of crime and immorality. Old conventions are shattered; restraints are denounced as unwarranted repressions of individuality; liberty is confounded with lawlessness. Russia, like France in that earlier day, has embarked upon a warfare against Christianity. John Dewey is not unlike Hume in his emphasis upon habit, his despite of metaphysics, his denial of eternal truths, and his limitation of the human mind to the observation and handling of particular facts. Where Tom Paine once pamphleteered against the God of the Christians, we now have Henry L. Mencken. Atheism has again become blatant, and societies devoted to the propaganda of irreligion are striving to make headway.

"The foes of Christ have never been more open in their antagonism than today. It is not merely that men are drawn away by pride and lust, by love of comfort, by spiritual dullness and inertia; there are those who deliberately reject Him. His way of life is derided as a code for weaklings and slaves. His revelation of God is ridiculed as a

mere phantasy of the imagination. Personal liberty, free expression, is the cry of a jazz age which is fast losing all standards of goodness and beauty and truth.

"The new paganism can not last. I have too much faith in human nature and in the love and power of God to believe that this sort of thing can go on very long. There are already signs of its breaking up" (Weigle, *The New Paganism*).

A Militant Infidelity Revived

Prior to The Great Revival, infidelity hoped to overthrow the church. The French Revolution encouraged American infidels to boast that Christianity would be laid aside as an obsolete system, and that within two generations the churches would cease to exist. There is today a similar international aggressive atheistical movement. It aims to crush the Christian church and civilization.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones, in a recent article, entitled *What I Saw in China*, calls attention to the menace of atheistic communism: "Climb to the top of China's sacred mountain, Taishan, and you will find the Buddhist and Taoist priests smoking opium or gambling. The future lies with communism or Christianity. General Chang Kai Shek told me that he thought that the final battle in China would be between those two, and then added, 'and not only in China, but in the world.' I agree, but hasten to add that Christianity must not be identified with a capitalistic order, for fully applied I believe it would issue into some form of corporate sharing,

closely akin to communism, but without its class work, its ruthlessness, its comparisons and its atheism. . . .

“Whether the type of Christianity in China has enough of the social content of the gospel in it to meet the demand that underlies the trend toward communism remains to be seen. I found two groups: One individual and other-worldly; the other social and this-worldly. They need each other. A Chinese Kagawa must arise to fuse them into one. I found many feeling out for that synthesis. In some it has arrived.”

In a volume, *Investigation of Communist Propaganda*, published June, 1930, by the United States Government Printing Office, the present communistic propaganda is related to the militant atheism prior to 1800. This document says: “Experts who have studied Marx’s writings and know the sources of his ideas, say that in the Communist Manifesto there was nothing original but its form. Without any acknowledgment he took his ideas from earlier socialist writers and those contemporary with the French Revolution. Marx was an atheist. With vindictive hatred in his heart for Christianity he sneered at all social reform and humanitarian movements under the existing social order. He urged the complete overthrow of capitalism by violent means, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus he misled and betrayed the working men who were honestly seeking to better their working conditions without any particular thought of wrecking their governments.

“In plainest language, Marx set forth the code of Adam Weishaupt, another German-Jew apostate, who was only twenty-eight years old when he organized the secret revolutionary Order of the Illuminati, May 1, 1776, in Bavaria. Their purpose was to destroy Christianity and all existing governments. Dr. Adam Weishaupt was professor of canon law in the important University of Ingolstadt, Bavaria.

“Weishaupt duped leaders of government, church, and fraternal orders about the objectives of the Illuminati. He represented the order as a philanthropic movement devoted to Christ as their leader. The best and the worst people joined the order, neither kind knowing the others. Finally the evil purposes of the order became known to four college professors, who left it in disgust and informed the Bavarian Government of the true character of Weishaupt and the people he controlled. The Bavarian Government sent reports of this information to all other European countries, warning them of this menace threatening them. The order was broken up, its leaders were driven from the country; but it went further underground and is actively working today under other names in countless political, religious and educational movements throughout the world.”

“In 1797, John Robison, professor of natural philosophy, and secretary to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, who had studied all the evidence of the four professors, wrote his book, *Proofs of a Conspiracy Against All the Religions and Governments*

of *Europe*.* His book tells the aims of the Illuminati:

"1. The order was said to abjure Christianity. . . . they intended to root out all religion.

"2. To destroy morality, and even break the bonds of domestic life, by destroying the veneration for the marriage vows and by taking the education of children out of the hands of the parents.

"3. They accounted all princes usurpers and tyrants, and all privileged orders as their abettors.

"4. They meant to abolish the laws which protected property accumulated by long-continued and successful industry, and to prevent for the future any such accumulation.

"5. Patriotism and loyalty were called narrow-minded prejudice incompatible with universal benevolence.

"Robison ends by saying: 'This was all that the Illuminati could teach, and this was precisely what France has done.'

"Is this not precisely what Russia has done also? The plan has therefore been in existence for no less than 150 years, and is now being carried out before our eyes. . . . The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 began where the French Revolution left off in 1797" (*Investigation of Communistic Propaganda*, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.).

This is the same atheism which warred against the church in the closing decades of the eighteenth century. America was its battlefield. Its organized attacks were so violent that the lines of the Christian church commenced to waver. However,

*A footnote added to Timothy Dwight's "Baccalaureate Sermon" in 1796, called attention to Robison's book.

The Great Revival turned the tide of battle; the atheists ranks were broken. So crushing was the defeat, infidelity became a vanishing force in America in the century which followed. Doubt is never a match for a vital faith.

It is refreshing to learn, according to John Johnson, recently returned from Russia, that the cause of Evangelical Christianity has prospered under persecution. According to figures furnished by the atheists themselves, Evangelical Christians have grown in Russia in fourteen years from 609,000 to 7,500,000. Johnson writes: "After fourteen years of intense antagonism against religion, atheistic communism has not got so very far after all. I am perfectly certain that, notwithstanding the atheistic mockery, threats and persecution leveled against them, ninety-five percent of the Russian people are deeply religious, still believe in God, while millions of them continue to accept and confess Christ as Saviour and Lord" (Johnson, *Russia in the Grip of Bolshevism*).

The methods used in The Great Revival were not carnal. The Almighty God watched world movements. He waited for the church to become the instrument He could use. All the churches in America were called to prayer. Prayer released the power of the Almighty then, and enabled the eternal God to work out His program for the spiritual uplift of the world.

In such an hour as we are facing today, with the world hovering between a world revolution and a general religious revival, we do well to turn to

the story of The Great Revival which came to our nation in a similar crisis of its history. What God could do in the opening decades of our nation's history He can do today. What the church did then to enable God to use it as His instrument for the defeat of a militant atheism, we should seriously seek to do again. The world-wide revival of atheism can be defeated by a world-wide revival of true evangelical Christianity.

Great Movements Awaiting Essential Power

Great movements were under way prior to The Great Revival. There were beginnings in both home and foreign missionary work. There were about a dozen Sunday schools in the United States. There was some agitation against duelling, intemperance and slavery. These movements were like ships in a harbor in a dead calm. The Great Revival brought the heavenly gales which filled their sails and sent them into the great ocean of service for God and humanity.

Today the stage is set along similar lines. Christian education, missionary education, a growing social consciousness which looks upon the whole world as a brotherhood, and evangelistic plans, have given the church a program unprecedented in its history. There are blue prints enough, plans enough and machinery sufficient to save the world if all depended upon the human element. We lack essential power. We await the supernatural. A great revival is our greatest necessity. Many believe another great revival is imminent.

Expectancy of Revival

One of the hopeful signs that "the night is far spent" and that "the morning breaketh," is the growing concern for a great spiritual awakening. Prayer groups are increasing in number in all parts of the world. Thinking people are articulating the deepest need of the Christian church. They are talking revival. There is a growing expectancy.

Dean Weigle writes: "I believe that we are on the threshold of a great revival of religious faith. The world is beginning to sense its spiritual hunger just as in the closing years of the eighteenth century, with their barren deism and open infidelity were followed by the Evangelical Awakening and The Great Revival, the Methodist movement, and the fervours of Pietism, we may expect the denials and excesses of present unbelief will lead to a new spiritual awakening."

Dr. Denton Thompson, bishop of Sodor and Man, England, expressed for his country what is true generally: "What is needed, with a priority and urgency no words can exaggerate, is a spiritual revival, a requickening of the spiritual life, a refilling with the Holy Ghost, a renewal of the Power of Pentecost."

Bishop William T. Manning, speaking recently in the heart of New York's financial district, diagnosed the malady afflicting our nation and world. He pointed to the remedy:

"We are deeply disturbed and anxious about the economic situation which confronts us, but the

real trouble with us is not economic, but moral and spiritual.

“Our fathers and mothers did not have motor cars and movies and radios and airplanes, but they overcame difficulties far greater than any that we face today because they devoutly believed in and valiantly served God.

“Why is it that in our public life, in the business world, and in all departments of life, there is today such a lack of high and true leadership?

“Why is it that there is all through our life a shocking increase of crime and lawlessness, and a general lowering of moral standards?

“It is because there has been in our land, in recent time, a widespread weakening of faith in God.

“Powerful influences have been at work weakening the foundations of religion among us, and we have paid little heed to it.

“What about our whole public educational system with God and religion left out of it, what has been the effect of that on the life of our land?

“What about the boys and girls whom we send to our colleges and universities, and who come out, multitudes of them, with their faith in God weakened or destroyed, and so with no real foundation for the battle of life?

“What about the clever, sophisticated attack on faith in God, and on the whole ideal of Christian morals, propagated under the specious name of the ‘new morality’ by men of the school of Bertrand Russell and Aldous Huxley?

“What we need today is not new political institutions, or new economic systems. Those would accomplish nothing of themselves. What we need today is a new spirit. We need all over our land a revival of faith in the living God and of reverence for his laws.

“Let us not ask for a return of our former false prosperity, but for a return of integrity and honor and responsibility and duty among us.” (Report of Ash Wednesday message in *New York Times*, March 2, 1933.)

Burns, in *Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders*, writes: “The church of Christ is not on the eve of perishing. It is on the eve of revival. For as sure as day cometh, when the long night is ended, so revival comes after every time of tribulation. Nothing in the world is more certain than this. The question is not, ‘Will the church be revived?’ One may as well ask, ‘Will the sun rise tomorrow?’ The question for us is not, ‘When will the church be revived?’ but ‘How can we hasten this?’ No revival work can come from below. Must we remain inert? Surely not. Prayer illumines us to a sense of our own and our world’s need. By prayer we can prepare the soul and so hasten the advent of the new day of grace.”

The Road to Revival

The history of the past gives us a chart for the future. What God did in the past shows us, as St. Augustine puts it, “The direction in which the will of God operates.” History repeats itself.

This encourages us to believe that there will be another great general revival. Although the spiritual tide may be far out, the ocean of God's limitless resources is in no danger of going dry. The tide will come in again. What should the church do when the tide is out?

Put Revival Back into Evangelism

The retreat in evangelism must be stopped by a movement which takes us back to revival. The word "revival" must be stripped of those connotations which have put it in disrepute. We must put revival back into our evangelism.

Charles G. Finney's definition of a revival is as pertinent today as it was a century ago, when he first penned it. In this he expressed the revival secret as it was demonstrated in The Great Revival: "A revival consists in the return of the church from her backsliding, and in the conversion of sinners. A revival always includes conviction of sin on the part of the church. It is nothing else than a new beginning of obedience to God. Christians will have their faith renewed. They will be filled with a tender and burning love for souls. A revival breaks the power of the world and of sin over Christians. When the churches are thus awakened and reformed, the salvation of sinners will follow, going through the same stages of conviction, repentance and reformation."

Christ needs a channel of communication, a spiritual life stream through which He can work. The revival idea stresses this essential. It is not

what we do for Christ; it is rather what we permit Him to do through us. It is the transmission of life itself. There must be spiritual life to beget life.

When evangelistic methods turn our churches into factories, we may secure a product having the form of godliness, but which denies the power thereof. Religious automatons can be manufactured, but regenerated lives are another thing. The mystery of life defies the mechanic. Regeneration comes primarily by the Spirit of all life, the Holy Spirit.

✓ He who prays for revival must consistently promote revival in his own life. It is not surprising that many of the great revivals were born at "the Sacramental Occasions." This is especially true of The Great Revival. It is due to the fact that the revivalist pastors of that day considered preparation as essential to the proper participation in the Lord's Supper. A study of the preparatory programs of the great evangelical denominations reveals the fact that the three constituent parts of a revival have been stressed; namely, a reaffirmation of faith, a renewal of repentance, and a renewal of covenant obligations. These three things are the essential elements of a revival of religion. When the note of reality, the revival note, dominated the precommunion preparatory services, not only was the church revived, but souls were converted. The church which makes real this essential reviving of its membership is on the road to revival.

The Evangel in Evangelism

Preaching had an important place in The Great Revival. Much is written today about going back to Jesus for the truths which should be preached. Christ's talk with Nicodemus is a good starting place for a study of what should be preached today. The Master was talking to a man of considerable culture. He said, "Marvel not that I say unto thee, ye must be born again." The great Teacher talked about being regenerated by the Spirit, about seeing and entering into the kingdom of God. He recognized the mystery element in the new-birth experience. He clearly revealed it could be appropriated by faith. The essential new-birth experience was related to the cross of Calvary, the gift of God's love. Christ's conversation was the message of the cross and its associated truths given in a language which his hearer could understand and illustrated with those things with which he was familiar.

The late Dr. C. Wallace Petty, in his diagnosis of what the church is facing today in evangelism, writes: "Nor is there any substitute for what yesterday called the work of the Holy Spirit in changing human nature. Redemption is not something which is produced by following blue prints, diagrams and carefully articulated graphs concerning seasons of the soul and tides of the spirit. There is an unexplaining factor in religious experience that is like the wind blowing where it listeth. Refusing supernaturalism in scientific realms does not neces-

sarily involve the absolute elimination of the profound mystery in the actions and reactions of spiritual reality.

“There is a call for the equivalents in modern religious experiences of what yesterday called the sense of guilt, the need of a Saviour, and the justification by faith. The old theology may be passing, but the old experience ought to be conserved (Petty, “Commencement Address,” *Crozer Bulletin*, June, 1930).

The “doctrines of grace” were emphasized in all great revivals. One great doctrine received the major emphasis. It was “regeneration” in the Great Awakening; it was “human responsibility” in The Great Revival. This was never done by discarding its relation to the cross of Christ and its related truths. The terminology was usually adapted to the age.

The common theological denominator of all the great historic revivals would be a safe guide for one seeking the road to revival. If we must use another terminology, we need not evade the essential truth. A modern translation of the Bible must be true to the original text. The Bible is our guidebook. Man is in need of a Saviour. Jesus Christ is the Saviour he needs. Salvation is by grace. Something was done for him on Calvary’s cross which he could not do for himself. Justification is by faith, and not by works. Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit. No great revival ever visited the church which was not ethical and missionary in its result and outlook. Christianity with-

out these is like a tree which has no fruit. It is nothing but leaves.

The Priority of Prayer

Prayer was an important factor in The Great Revival. It had priority in importance over all other evangelistic methods. The hope of the church, then, was in the prayer group whose members prayed for revival and at the same time promoted revival in their own lives.

Through clever propaganda and organization, atheistic communism is working today on every continent. Atheistic communism depends on what they call the Nuclei—small groups in factories, schools, colleges, etc. These are depended upon to win the war for communism. God also works through minorities. Christ had a small group of twelve disciples, an other of seventy followers. Peter had a minority of 120 out of five hundred witnesses to the resurrection. These evangelistic nuclei, these prayer groups, have ever been the hope of the Christian church. They were the secret of The Great Revival in the East, in the West, in our colleges and in its subsequent sustained revival waves.

The world awaits today a channel of communication from the heart of heaven to the heart of humanity. Pentecost was the result of such a line of communication being established. A praying Christ at heaven's end of the line reached toward humanity with an outreach which had to be supplemented. A prayer group, an intercessory nu-

cleus, reached up to Christ and the line of communication was completed. Then, according to promise, which awaited both the exaltation of Christ and the establishment of the prayer group, streams of living water flowed from God through the church to needy humanity. We call that event Pentecost (John 7:37-39; Acts 2:32, 33).

According to an old story, the people in a little Scotch village awakened one morning to find that the fires had gone out on every hearth in their village. Looking out they saw smoke coming from a chimney of a cottage high up on the mountain side. One by one these villagers, wading through the snow, journeyed up the hillside with their fire pans. Each one brought back a live coal with which to rekindle his own hearth fire. Soon the fires were burning on every hearth in that little village, and every home was filled with warmth and cheer.

Have the spiritual fires gone out on the hearts of our hearts and homes? Is the church cold and uninviting? The fires will never be rekindled from the dead ashes of our own altars. We must look without to Calvary's mount and beyond it, through the rifted clouds, to the throne of God. There Christ's love is a perpetual flame. Only at His altar can our hearts be rekindled with fire from above.

"If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (1 Chron. 7:13, 14).

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